

**FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL COORDINATION:  
HOW PREPARED IS PENNSYLVANIA TO RESPOND  
TO A TERRORIST ATTACK OR NATURAL DISASTER?**

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**HEARING**

BEFORE THE

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGENCY  
COMMUNICATIONS, PREPAREDNESS,  
AND RESPONSE**

OF THE

**COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

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(II)

# CONTENTS

	Page
STATEMENTS	
The Honorable Henry Cuellar, a Representative in Congress From the State of Texas, and Chairman, Subcommittee on Emergency Communications, Preparedness, and Response .....	1
The Honorable Charles W. Dent, a Representative in Congress From the State of Pennsylvania, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Emergency Communications, Preparedness, and Response .....	3
WITNESSES	
Mr. Robert French, Director, Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency:	
Oral Statement .....	14
Prepared Statement .....	17
Ms. MaryAnn Marrocolo, Deputy Managing Director, Managing Director's Office, Philadelphia Office of Emergency Management:	
Oral Statement .....	27
Prepared Statement .....	29
Mr. R. Chadwick Paul, Jr., Chief Executive Office, Ben Franklin technology Partners of Northeast Pennsylvania on behalf of Wall Street West:	
Oral Statement .....	31
Prepared Statement .....	33
Mr Jonathan Sarubbi, Regional Administrator, FEMA Region III, Department of Homeland Security:	
Oral Statement .....	5
Prepared Statement .....	8
Mr. Robert G. Werts, Program Manager, Northeast Pennsylvania Regional Counter Terrorism Task Force:	
Oral Statement .....	20
Prepared Statement .....	23



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RESPOND TO A TERRORIST ATTACK OR  
NATURAL DISASTER?**

**Monday, September 10, 2007**

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS,  
PREPAREDNESS, AND RESPONSE  
*Washington, DC.*

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 10:00 a.m., at the Fowler Family Southside Center, Northampton Community College, 511 East Third Street, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, 18015, Hon. Henry Cuellar [Chairman of the Subcommittee] presiding.

Member present: Representative Dent.

Mr. CUELLAR. Subcommittee on Emergency Communications, Preparedness, and Response will come to order now. Good morning and I want to welcome everybody to our panel, of course our members of the panel, to the audience. I understand, Charlie, we got some students also will be coming in and I am so happy that we got students coming in. And, also, as a graduate of a community college I am going to thank you very much for holding this. And I have always said that I do know community colleges educate over half of our students and they play a very important role and especially in this new changing technology. I mean the world that we have, economy and the needs to make sure that we are able to address our technology needs that we have community colleges, they used to be junior colleges, now community colleges are doing a great job. So it is always a pleasure being here.

First I would like welcome all of you here as this subcommittee examines how the Federal, State, and regional, and local officials, first responders and the private sector are working together to prepare the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, its communities and its residents to respond to a natural disaster or a terrorist attack. I would like to first of all thank my good friend Charlie for being such a good host. Charlie and I have done some work together. We were in Iraq last year. It was hot, came down to Laredo, my home town, it was hotter. In Laredo down there in the border and, of course, Charlie and I served together on the committee, a Ranking Member and let me tell you, Congressman Dent, your Congressman, Charlie has been a good member. He works very hard. He is very diligent. He does his homework. And right after this, as you know, we have to rush back to Washington to hear the status re-

port on Iraq, as you know, so we got to go back up there. But Charlie has been doing a great job in making sure that we discuss the critical security challenges that the northeastern Pennsylvania faces and I am glad to be here with him on this important issue. Charlie has been a good partner. We have worked very well together in a bipartisan, who is the Democrat, who is the Republican here. He is the Republican. I am the Democrat. Okay. All right. We have worked in a very bipartisan to address some of the important issues and I think that is the way things should be done especially when we talk about Homeland Security. Partisan issues should be set aside and we should focus on what is good for the nation, what is good for the State or the Commonwealth or for our local community and Charlie has done that. So I really look forward to working with him and doing other field hearings to other parts of the country, also.

You know, too often people who spend too much time in Washington lose touch what is going on in the real world and I think this type of real hearings that we have, field hearings are so important. I think it is important for members of the Homeland Security Committee to travel around the country to see what is being done by local officials. I would rather have those ideas come up from the local governments or local officials or private sector instead of Washington telling you what the, you know, what the answers are. It should be the other way and this is why we are here today. We are all very well aware of the disasters that all disasters are local and you can bear a large majority of the responsibilities for protecting the citizens. While I continue to believe that more dollars need to be allocated to many of our first responders, grant programs, as you know, of the Subcommittee that we are in that is where the dollars are at. A majority of the preparedness dollars will always come from the local level that is the partnership that we work together.

All right. During this hearing we will look forward to discussing such issues that how reforms to FEMA are changing preparedness at the local level. How grant funds administered by the Department of Homeland Security are being utilized. How citizen preparedness efforts can be more effective, and whether we are doing enough in the areas of public health preparedness. I also look forward to discussing the issue of evacuation planning. Northeastern Pennsylvania is in a very unique geographic area. You are in close proximity to both New York and Philadelphia and would clearly feel the effects and the need to be prepared for a large-scale evacuation of those cities.

In closing, Hurricane Katrina and the subsequent flooding of New Orleans exposed significant flaws in our Government's ability to prepare for, mitigate against, respond to and recover from this type of major disasters. The committee is determined to work closely with State and local officials as we reform FEMA and the Department of Homeland Security to ensure that this never happens again. Some progress has been made but more challenges still remain and we have a lot of work to do and this is why I want to thank all the witnesses here today because we certainly want to gather the information. We certainly want to learn from you as we do our work.

At this time the Chair is happy to recognize the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Emergency Communications, Preparedness, and Response, the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. Dent, for an opening statement.

Mr. DENT. Thanks, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for being here. Thank you for the kind words and all the courtesies you extended us just by being here today. I very much appreciate that. And it was just about two years ago this time, two years ago two weeks, I guess, that Chairman Cuellar and I spent time in Iraq together flying over the country at 200 feet for a few hours. That was an experience from Kirkuk to Baghdad, and about a year ago this time, he and I were on the border and he represents Laredo, Texas, the largest inland port in the United States. That and I guess the Port of Detroit. On the southern border it is the largest inland port I had a great experience, and again, spent a good part of the day in a helicopter with him. I won't tell you what happened in that helicopter but it was just as hot as Iraq and we didn't have to wear body armor in Laredo. But it was a great experience and I got a chance to visit his community and his constituency and it is really quite a dynamic area, Laredo, Texas. You really get to understand the impact of trade just by visiting a community like Laredo, Texas and the farsighted leadership in his community. Chairman Cuellar has been a tremendous leader in the Congress. We were elected together back in 2005 and I really enjoyed that opportunity to spend time with him down in his hometown. And you really learn a great deal about of America if you visit a place like Laredo, that is one thing I will tell you. I'd, also, like to thank all the students who are here today, delighted that you have joined us, as well as many in the first responder community.

This Subcommittee often discusses important issues about first responders, preparedness, and community engagement while we are in Washington. It is not often, however, that we are able to hold this type of a field hearing right here in our community to talk about two issues that are important to all of us: natural disasters and acts of terrorism. And, of course, living here in Pennsylvania, you know, we are a very flood-prone State as you can well imagine and this community has suffered three significant floods over the past two years. And that is something that we keep a great deal of watch on as members of this Subcommittee in addition to terrorism. We look at both man-made and natural disasters as a part of our mission.

Therefore, I am extraordinarily pleased that we are seizing this unique opportunity here in Bethlehem, particularly since September is designated as National Preparedness Month. And today's hearing will bring together representatives of key Federal, State, and local agencies involved in emergency management planning, preparedness for a pandemic or other public health emergency, evacuation and shelter plans—and given, our proximity to New York, that is obviously a very significant concern, as well as our proximity to Philadelphia and, of course, in ensuring that our firefighters, police, emergency managers receive the proper training and equipment to effectively fulfill their duties. So I look forward to hearing from these witnesses on how they are working together

to coordinate their various planning efforts and resources to strengthen our overall preparedness.

We, also, have with us a representative today from Wall Street West, my good friend, Chad Paul, who needs no introduction here. He is with Ben Franklin Technology Partners. Wall Street West is a new initiative designed to make sure that the financial services community is fully prepared to continue operations in the wake of a disaster occurring in the New York metropolitan area. And so that is an extraordinarily important initiative that I think many of us want to learn more about that. The Securities and Exchange Commission has had a great deal to say about that particular issue and we will hear more from Chad Paul about that. But I look forward to discussing this unique effort by Wall Street West and, you know, how it is going to strengthen the preparedness and resiliency of the business community and how it could potentially impact our Lehigh Valley.

Again, I once more want to thank our good friends here at Northampton Community College for allowing us to hold this hearing on the south campus. And, also, thanks too for bringing the check, the \$1.2 million and the EDA Grant, that is nice that you brought that here. And, of course, I should, just by way of a commercial, note that Northampton Community College is very active in local emergency preparedness and response efforts. Not only does the college offer a degree program in emergency services, but it also has developed a program to deliver emergency response training based on the National Incident Management System. This approach has fostered greater coordination between local government and the community and has received attention as a possible national model to promote what we refer to as NIMS, the National Incident Management System, compliance. So thank you to Northampton Community College for your leadership in that area.

And, again, thanks to the all witnesses here today. We look forward to receiving your testimony. Again, special thanks to my good friend, Henry Cuellar. We have been able to work, I think, in a wonderful bipartisan manner in Washington and it has been, you know, when we talk about business it is not about Republicans or Democrats. It is about doing what is best for this country and for our communities and for the security of our homeland. So with that, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CUELLAR. Thank you, Mr. Dent. And, again, really committee rules any other members of the subcommittee that are not present here may submit their opening statements for the record. Also, for any of the witnesses or anybody that needs to say anything I know we got our staff here and I certainly want to thank our staff for the work that they have done for putting this together. The other thing is as we get started the first field hearing of the subcommittee for this Congressional, this Legislative Session is here. This is the first one that we have had, the first field hearing so it really speaks very highly of the work that Mr. Dent has done and I certainly want to recognize him for his work.

At this time I would welcome our panel of witnesses. Our first witness is Mr. Jonathan Sarubbi who is a Regional Administrator for FEMA Region III for the Department of Homeland Security. Mr. Sarubbi was appointed to this position in March of 2007. He



spent 26 years in the Coast Guard specializing in marine safety, port security and collusion response. Welcome.

Our second witness is Mr. Robert French who is the Director of the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency. Mr. French was appointed by Governor Edward Rendell on July 20, 2007. He has been directly involved in emergency management operations for more than 30 years. Again, welcome.

Our third witness is Mr. Robert Werts and is the Program Manager for the Northeast Pennsylvania Regional Counter Terrorism Task Force. Prior to being in this position he was a member of the Pennsylvania State Police for nearly 35 years. Welcome.

Our fourth witness is Ms. MaryAnn Marrocolo who is the Deputy Manager Director for Emergency Management for the City of Philadelphia. Before that she spent over seven years with the New York Office of Emergency Management pending her tenure there as the Assistant Commissioner for Planning and Preparedness. Welcome.

Our fifth witness is our last witness is Mr. Chadwick Paul who is the Chief Executive Officer of the Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Northeast Pennsylvania. He is appearing this morning on behalf of the Wall Street West. Welcome.

Again, to all of you we are very pleased to have you here. Without any objections the witnesses' full statements will be inserted in the record. I now ask each witness to summarize his or her statement for five minutes beginning with Mr. Sarubbi.

**STATEMENT OF JONATHAN SARUBBI, REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR, FEMA REGION III, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY**

Mr. SARUBBI. Good morning, Chairman Cuellar and Congressman Dent. It is indeed a pleasure to be here this morning to talk about FEMA preparedness, mitigation, and response and recovery activities within Region III. My name is Jonathan Sarubbi and I am privileged to serve as the Region III Administrator for the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency in Philadelphia. Thank you for inviting me to appear before you today. My objective is to highlight for you the steps FEMA in Region III have taken to strengthen the region and improve our relationships with our Federal, State and local partners. I will also discuss our readiness for natural and man-made disasters.

As a Regional Administrator I oversee FEMA's all-hazard preparedness and emergency management efforts in Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia. Helping me to carry out my duties are nearly 90 full-time employees along with more than 400 disaster reservists. Since 2002 Region III has responded to and assisted with the recovery from 46 major disaster declarations and 11 emergency declarations providing more than \$1.1 billion in assistance to over a quarter of million residents. During the same period 11 disaster declarations in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania have resulted in the distribution of just 386 million in disaster assistance to nearly 50,000 families, State and local governments and some private non-profit entities.

FEMA Region III has been working diligently to build a strong, capable and responsive region. This progress is exemplified in the work we have done in the terms of partnerships, training, exercises, gap analysis and citizen preparedness. Let me briefly elaborate on these efforts. The worse time to build relationships is during a disaster. Region III is working aggressively to enhance communication with Federal, State and local leaders. We maintain a wide variety of relationships with emergency management officials from all levels of government and law enforcement, ranging from State emergency management agencies to antiterrorist task forces such as the Southeastern Pennsylvania Regional Counter Terrorism Task Force and the Antiterrorism Advisory Councils established by the U.S. Attorney's Office.

Additionally, FEMA and the Department of Defense have taken major strides to ensure that the Federal and military response is coordinated and seamless especially at the regional level. Region III's defense coordinating element serves as the single point of contact for the command and control of active duty forces assigned to respond in an emergency operation. FEMA's Regional III's exercise officer coordinates our preparation or excuse me, participation in Federal, State and local exercises as well as handles our assistance to other agencies in the planning, execution and evaluation of their exercises. Region III has participated in and facilitated many all-hazard exercises including oil and hazardous material spills, agroterrorism, terrorism and pandemic flu exercises.

One of the most visible and successful exercises was the 2007 Liberty Down exercise held on February 8, 2007. Partnering with the Philadelphia Federal Executive Board and the Southeastern Pennsylvania Regional Task Force, this exercise tested and evaluated the ability of organizations to activate their continuity of operations plans during a natural emergency. Approximately 600 participants from 102 Federal, State and local agencies as well as the private sector participated in this event. It was one of the nation's largest and most successful continuity of operations planning exercises. Building on this event a full-scale exercise is being planned for 2008.

The old paradigm we are waiting for State and local governments to be overwhelmed before providing Federal assistance is a thing of the past. We are leaning forward to anticipate the need or the needs of our State and local partners and to fill them as quickly as we can. One of the ways which we are preparing for this proactive response is by partnering with our States in something we call a gap analysis. Since March we have been working closing with our hurricane-prone States using a consistent set of measures and tools to evaluate strengths and vulnerabilities. The focus of the assessment is on debris removal, interim housing, sheltering, evacuation, commodities distribution, medical communications and fuel needs. As a part of this initiative we have entered into partnerships with State and local agencies far beyond our traditional emergency management agencies to rely—to really understand their roles in disasters and their capabilities. To accomplish this Region III deployed a task force to Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia. As this assessment tool is further de-

veloped into an all-hazards program we anticipate similar efforts with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

Another initiative that is equally important is our citizen preparedness. FEMA is working to build a culture of preparedness in America. DHS and FEMA administers three main initiatives to achieve this goal, the Ready Campaign, FEMA's community preparedness informational materials, and the Citizens Corps. Region III has emphasized individual preparedness in press releases, Congressional advisories, public service announcements, region-wide displays in libraries, and even in customer bill inserts through the Cox Communications Cable Network. Stressed are three key points: be informed about the types of emergencies that could possibly occur, assemble an emergency supply kit, and have a family communications plan.

Building upon the agencies Get Ready 1907 hurricane awareness campaign, Region III held a Safety and Health Expo on June 14, 2007, on the historic grounds of Independence Mall in Philadelphia, bringing together more than 40 vendors from Federal, State and local agencies as well as the private sector.

Also, Region III's Citizen Corps program works daily to support State and local efforts. In the region, there are 144 Citizen Corps county councils and 60 local councils. Here in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania there are 46 Citizen Corps county councils and four local councils. Since 2003, the Department has provided Pennsylvania Citizen Corps programs with more than \$3.7 million which has resulted in education and training of Commonwealth citizens.

As I speak, Citizen Corps councils throughout the nation are fully engaged in events for Ready Campaigns National Preparedness Month. This year's campaign is developed around four weekly themes meant to engage and educate families, neighborhoods, and citizens across the region. This week's theme is business preparedness.

Let me now discuss the impact of recent legislation reforms on FEMA's mission. The post-Katrina Management Reform Act of 2006 which was signed into law on October 4, 2006, has significantly expanded FEMA's mission and authorities. In April, several key programs from the former Department of Homeland Security's preparedness directorate transferred into FEMA, including the Ready Emergency Preparedness Program, Citizens Corps, Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program, the Office of National Capitol Region Coordination, and the Office of Grants and Training. These programs are currently managed at the headquarters level, however, there are working groups currently working to integrate these programs responsibilities into the regional offices across the country. This restructuring has resulted in a new FEMA, strengthening our all-hazards operational framework and coordination capabilities.

We will soon bring aboard a Federal Preparedness Coordinator or FPC. The FPC's primary role will be to coordinate the establishment of regional, domestic, all-hazard preparedness goals and play a vital role in information sharing and relationship building. The FPC will particularly improve the region's readiness by strength-

ening links with State Homeland Security Advisors, Fusion Centers, Joint Terrorist Task Force.

In addition to the FPC we are increasing our disaster operations and disaster assistance staffs to strengthen our capabilities and expertise in those areas. We are also finding ways to better utilize skilled staff we have, for example, implementing a specialized planning unit to coordinate contingency planning across the region.

Responding to the many lessons emerging from the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, FEMA has invested heavily to improve its capabilities in several areas to better prepare for and respond to disasters. These include communications in disaster operations, disaster assistance, logistics management, and operational planning. My written testimony expands on these areas in greater detail but given their importance let me briefly highlight a few of them.

Within the regional office we are making technological improvements to enhance our ability to coordinate with our Federal, State and local partners during an incident by upgrading our Regional Response Coordination Center. The Center is the central location where Federal agencies locate forming a regional command center to coordinate the regional disaster response. Enhancements include an upgraded computer system and extended audiovisual systems for situational awareness which increase the reporting capability throughout the regional office. Our video teleconferencing capabilities will be upgraded in the near future allowing FEMA headquarters national response coordination to contact with the RRCC in real time.

To meet the needs of catastrophic incident a new policy allows States to request a Pre-Disaster Emergency Declaration when they are threatened by a natural or man-made incident that could result in a major disaster. This new form of declaration would make Federal aid available in advance of a disaster and would provide equipment, supplies, and advance deployment of those response teams.

Lastly, the Regional Advisory Council and the Regional Emergency Communication Coordination Working Group are being established and will advise me on all aspects of emergency response management and communications. Both groups will consist of representatives from all levels of government, Federal, State, and local, as well as the private sector.

In conclusion, I believe real progress has been made in strengthening FEMA's regions and as a result Region III continues to enhance its capabilities to respond to disasters of any kind. Ultimately, the new FEMA we are creating will keep the American people better prepared across the spectrum of all hazards and safer than they were before.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to answering your questions.

[The prepared statement of Jonathan Sarubbi follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JONATHAN SARUBBI

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Chairman Cuellar, Ranking Member Dent, and members of the Committee.

My name is Jonathan and I am privileged to serve as the Region III Administrator for the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in Philadelphia.

Thank you for inviting me to appear before you today to highlight for you the steps FEMA and Region III have taken to strengthen the region and improve our relationships with our Federal, State and local partners to ensure we are prepared to respond successfully to future disasters. Let me begin with a brief overview of Region III and my role as the Regional Administrator.

#### **Overview of Region III**

As the Regional Administrator, I oversee FEMA's all-hazards preparedness and emergency management efforts in Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia. As the primary FEMA representative and coordinator for this region, I oversee the development, implementation and execution of all of FEMA's programs and initiatives, and work with State and local partners and the private sector to build a strong, capable, and responsive region.

Helping me to carry out my duties are nearly 90 dedicated full-time employees along with more than 450 disaster reservists, commonly known as Disaster Assistance Employees. Our Defense Coordinating Element (DCE) from U.S. Army-North, is co-located with us in Philadelphia. The DCE is a full-time, seven-person element that interacts daily with Region III personnel and leadership to provide expertise and support to our ongoing planning efforts.

Let me also briefly share with you the scope of disaster assistance provided by Region III since 2000. We have responded to and assisted with the recovery from 46 major disaster declarations and 11 emergency declarations. In so doing, we have provided assistance to over a quarter of a million residents, disbursing over \$1.1 billion in Federal assistance.

Pennsylvania alone has received 11 major disaster declarations for severe storms and flooding. Of these, nine were major disaster declarations and two were emergency declarations. Through the Individual Assistance Program, \$13.3 million was awarded. Under the Public Assistance Program, \$253.3 million was awarded to eligible State and local governments as well as some private nonprofit organizations.

#### **Legislative Reforms Strengthen FEMA/Region III**

The Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 (PKEMRA), which was signed into law by President Bush on October 4, 2006, calls for a major transformation by integrating preparedness and grant missions with legacy missions to create what we refer to as "New FEMA". This transformation will, in part, strengthen FEMA's 10 regional offices and strengthen our all-hazards operational framework and coordination capabilities. All of these actions are consistent with the for a New FEMA. Working groups are reviewing our structure and key processes to develop a regional implementation plan that will integrate these programmatic organizational changes seamlessly at the regional level.

Many of the changes associated with the New FEMA are already being implemented within Region III. This includes communication, collaboration and alignment with new organizational elements at the Headquarters level. We frequently coordinate programs and exercise activities with them, sharing information, and participating in joint events such as annual Grants Monitoring Visits and the Southeastern Pennsylvania Regional Counter Terrorism Task Force's Tri-State Preparedness Conference. We expect that the New FEMA structure will allow us to formalize these relationships and enhance our coordination in order to provide more seamless support to Pennsylvania and the country as a whole.

Pennsylvania consistently leads the nation in funds received through the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) Program. FEMA staff support fire AFG applicants by offering workshops which help prepare organizations to write their grant proposals, by offering technical assistance, and by monitoring grants. Under the FY 2006 AFG Program, 2,344 awards were made totaling \$194,429,925. During that time, one significant award was made to Lancaster County through the Upper Township Fire Department, representing more than 80 fire departments. This grant, which totaled \$1 million, the maximum allowed by law, will be used in an effort to address the population growth and increased risk experienced by Lancaster County. The project's scope includes the purchase and execution of a multi-band frequency and standardized communications equipment to replace obsolete and inoperative communications equipment. The outcome will be an interoperable 800MKZ system to talk directly with other emergency services disciplines, such as police, EMS, emergency management, local municipalities, State or Federal agencies.

Another of the specific changes coming very soon is the hiring of a Federal Preparedness Coordinator, or FPC. Region III is in the process of selecting a strong and experienced leader to fill this position. The FPC's primary role will be to improve the region's all-hazard preparedness posture by strengthening links with State Homeland Security Advisors, fusion centers, and joint terrorism task forces. One of the key responsibilities will be to develop integrated plans and courses of action

based on risk and capabilities assessments to enhance the region's readiness preparedness to prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from all hazards.

Responding to the many lessons emerging from the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, FEMA has invested heavily to improve its capabilities in several areas to better prepare for and respond to disasters. These include, among others, communications and disaster operations, disaster assistance, logistics management, operational planning, and other preparedness initiatives.

*First: Communications and Disaster Operations.*

We are making technological improvements to enhance our ability to coordinate with our Federal, State, and local partners during an incident. For example, we are upgrading our Regional Response Coordination Center (RRCC), which is the central location where Federal agencies co-locate forming a regional command center during a disaster to coordinate regional response under the current National Response Plan (NRP). We have upgraded our computer system and extended the video teleconferencing systems to increase situational awareness, thereby increasing reporting capacity throughout the regional office. This new system allows for local IT personnel to readily replace systems in the event of unit failure. The extension of the RRCC audio visual system to all conference rooms allows for staff and our Federal partners throughout the office to view current situational updates and participate in briefings without leaving their work locations.

Additional enhancements are under contract to add monitors for increased situational awareness and upgraded video teleconferencing capabilities. These enhancements will allow the National Response Coordination Center to connect to the RRCC in real time providing FEMA Headquarters and the region with the most current situational assessment for decision making purposes.

We are also in the process of hiring a full-time subject matter expert in field deployable emergency communication systems to promote our ability to communicate effectively during disasters and emergencies.

To further enhance disaster response capabilities, FEMA is developing the next generation of rapidly deployable interagency emergency response teams—Incident Management Assistance Teams, or IMATS. The primary mission of a FEMA or IMAT will be to rapidly deploy to an incident or incident-threatened venue and provide leadership to meet the emergent needs of State and local jurisdictions and support the initial establishment of a unified command. When not deployed, the teams will train with Federal, State, local, and tribal partners and provide a training capability to elevate State and local emergency management capabilities. The teams will also engage in consistent and coordinated operational planning and relationship building with State, local, and other stakeholders. Eventually, each FEMA region will have an IMAT team. Currently, FEMA is recruiting for positions on the teams that will be assigned to FEMA Headquarters in Washington, D.C., and Regions IV, V, and VI. FEMA expects to establish a team in each remaining Region by 2010.

PKEMRA also provides for the creation of a Regional Advisory Council (RAC) and a Regional Emergency Communications Coordination Working Group (RECCWG), which are both being established in Region III. Both groups will consist of representatives from all levels of government. While the RAC will advise me on all aspects of emergency management within Region III, the RECCWG will advise me on all aspects of emergency communications. I am in the process now of reviewing the nominations of candidates to serve on these committees. This RECCWG will, of course, fully support the ongoing communications improvements that the Commonwealth is already developing, including the roll out of the statewide voice and data interoperability across the State's 800 MHz Public Safety Radio Network connecting key State agency headquarters and field operations, the 67 county emergency managers and 9-1-1 centers, State health department locations, and Pennsylvania State Police consolidated dispatch centers across the State. In the Commonwealth allocated more than \$18 million of DHS funding for additional interoperable communications investments. Pennsylvania will also receive more than \$34 million from the DHS/Department of Commerce's Public Safety Interoperable Communications grant program (PSIC) to further their capacity throughout the Commonwealth. FEMA is committed to assisting with this progress wherever possible.

*Second: Disaster Assistance.*

To meet the needs of a catastrophic incident, we have enhanced our ability to register up to 200,000 disaster victims and inspect up to 20,000 homes per day. Mobile Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs) will be employed during these large-scale disasters. DRCs are facilities that provide on-site disaster assistance to victims, allowing them to register for temporary housing, grants, and other aid.

When States are immediately threatened by a natural or man-made incident that could result in a major disaster, States can now request a pre-disaster emergency

declaration. This new form of declaration would make Federal aid available in advance of a disaster, and would provide equipment, supplies, and the advance deployment of response teams. In concert with our forward leaning posture, we are implementing policies that will allow us to anticipate the States' needs and to fill them quickly.

To help enhance awareness and increase the preparedness and readiness levels of our State, tribal and local partners for future disaster operations, FEMA Region III has been very proactive, forward leaning and diligently to implement an aggressive education and training program for State, tribal and local officials through consultation and collaboration with various components of the Public Assistance program at both, the Headquarter and regional level. Our ongoing training and outreach efforts are intended to strengthen our existing relationships with State and local governments, while enhancing readiness capabilities of agencies and individuals involved in response and recovery operations, and provide the necessary tools to encourage more decisive actions during the grant award process.

#### *Third: Logistics.*

To be effective, we must be able to get what we need, where we need it, when we need it. Along these lines, a Logistics Management Directorate has been established at FEMA Headquarters and is to develop a system for full asset visibility. Region III logistics personnel have been trained to operate key components of a new system called Total Asset Visibility, which will enable them to submit requests for resources and to track the locations of shipments.

We are ready to answer the call to deliver the commodities and capabilities that the States request. Partnerships with the Defense Logistics Agency, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, General Services Administration and others are allowing us to strategically plan for this storm season and to lessen reduce the amounts of pre-positioned commodities, yet still be confident that we can meet requirements.

There are two logistics centers located in our region—Cumberland, Maryland and Frederick, Virginia. They are fully stocked for this storm season. We also have agreements with 10 National Guard and Department of Defense bases to establish Federal staging areas to receive and distribute commodities to State-operated points of distribution. One of these is located at the Willow Grove Naval Air Station outside of Philadelphia, where major air-oriented response and recovery operations will be conducted.

#### *Fourth: Operational Planning.*

The establishment of an all-risk Planning Unit in FEMA Region III has been a long standing regional priority. Effective July 30, 2007 in an effort to create a unified and concentrated focus, Region III stood up a Planning Unit within our National Preparedness Division. This unit will coordinate externally with our partners and internally with regional functions in producing operational and contingency plans and managing assessments. Placing the Planning Unit in our National Preparedness Division will draw on the synergy of the existing Continuity of Operations Program, exercises, National Incident Management System (NIMS), and agency grant programs that form the core components of regional preparedness. The overall emphasis of this team will be on all-hazards planning and will produce a more robust field organization with increased capability to deliver frontline services.

With the impending addition of emergency response operations and planning staff, we will greatly enhance our situational awareness and planning capability, as regional monitoring via the RRCC will be increased to 24-hours, 7-days a week.

#### **Regional Preparedness Activities**

Under the New FEMA, we are strengthening coordination with other DHS components, incorporating the concept of preparedness into all FEMA programs, and enhancing our ability to partner with State and local emergency management organizations, as well as the private sector. Through our partnerships and programs we are significant progress daily in preparing Region III for disasters—both natural and man-made. I will elaborate on these efforts:

#### *Citizen Preparedness*

FEMA is working to build a culture of preparedness in America. DHS and FEMA administer three main initiatives to achieve this goal—the *Ready* Campaign, community preparedness informational materials, and Citizen Corps.

*Ready* is the Department's public awareness campaign to encourage people to take simple steps to make themselves and their families prepared for emergencies. Understanding that assistance may be several days away after a catastrophic disaster, citizens have an important role in preparing for the first 72 hours following an incident. Region III has emphasized individual preparedness in press releases, congressional advisories, Public Service Announcements, wide displays in libraries, and

even in customer bill inserts through the Cox Communications Cable Company. We stressed three key points: be informed about the types of emergencies that could occur, assemble an emergency supply and have a family communication plan.

Building upon the "Get Ready '07" hurricane awareness campaign, Region III held a Safety and Health Expo on June 14, 2007 on the historic grounds of Independence Mall in Philadelphia, bringing together more than 40 vendors from Federal, State and local agencies as well as the private sector. The expo provided an opportunity for vendors to provide information on safety, health, and citizen preparedness.

Region III's Citizen Corps program works daily to support State and local efforts. In the region, there are 144 Citizen Corps county councils and 60 local councils. Here in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, there are 46 Citizen Corps county councils and 4 local councils. Since 2003, the Department has provided the Pennsylvania Citizen Corps Program with \$3,760,025 and the program has used that money efficiently to educate and train Commonwealth citizens. Since 2004, Pennsylvania Citizen Corps volunteers have logged thousands of hours executing events and presenting information about emergency preparedness to over 179,000 Pennsylvania citizens. Outreach has been conducted at county and safety fairs, senior expos, and open houses at schools. Audiences have ranged the gambit from Chambers of Commerce to Girl and Boy Scout troops, daycares, and senior centers. Pennsylvania Citizen Corps Councils have trained 3,441 citizens in Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training since 2004. During that same time period 8,427 citizens received other emergency preparedness training, including Damage Assessment, Pandemic Flu Preparedness, American Red Cross training, training, and NIMS, among others. Pennsylvania Citizen Corps is currently to bring both Campus CERT and Teen CERT programs to Pennsylvania.

#### *Partnerships*

The worst time to build relationships is during a disaster. Region III is working aggressively to improve communications with Federal, State and local leaders. We maintain a wide variety of relationships with emergency management officials in all levels of and law enforcement, including:

- State Emergency Management Agencies
- The Anti-Terrorism Advisory Councils (ATAC) (including Philadelphia and Pittsburgh)
- The Southeastern Pennsylvania Regional Counter Terrorism Task Force
- The Pittsburgh "Region 13" Regional Counterterrorism Task Force
- The Regional Response Team (RRT)
- The Area Committee (AC) and Area Maritime Security Committee (AMSC)
- Continuity Of Operations (COOP) coordination with the Federal Executive Boards (FEB) (Philadelphia and Pittsburgh)
- Delaware Valley Fusion Center

In May of this year, the Regional Interagency Steering Committee (RISC) meeting and Response and Recovery/Mitigation Summit were held at the Philadelphia regional office. More than 100 Federal and State officials attended. Region III holds RISC meetings semiannually to share information on Agency policies and procedures and to discuss initiatives that relate to disaster operations/assistance and mitigation. RISC members represent the agencies that would respond to a major disaster under the current National Response Plan.

Additionally, FEMA and the DoD have taken major strides to ensure that Federal and military response is coordinated and seamless, especially at the regional level. Region III's Defense Coordinating Element (DCE) serves as the single point of contact for the coordination and validation of civilian requests for support and for the command and control of active duty forces assigned to response operations. The Region III DCE has been active throughout the region. In Pennsylvania, the DCE participated in three major exercises over the last year in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Army National Guard. The Defense Coordination Officer, Colonel James met personally with the Director of the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency in April and the Pennsylvania Adjutant General in May.

#### *National Response Plan and National Incident Management System*

Pennsylvania Emergency Management is the lead agency for implementation of NIMS and the current National Response Plan (NRP) within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and we are committed to supporting PEMA. Pennsylvania faces many unique challenges in implementing NIMS. Their primary challenge is the fact that their 2,567 municipalities often lack dedicated staff assigned to emergency management. Region III has frequent interaction with the PEMA NIMS Coordinator, providing technical assistance and clarifying NIMS guidance. The PEMA Coordinator participated in the quarterly Region III NIMS Conference calls and the 2007 NIMS



Implementation Workshop. Additionally, PEMA has included the Region III NIMS Coordinator in their Statewide NIMS implementation conference calls.

As I am sure you are aware, the NRP is in the process of being revised and will be superseded by the National Response Framework. Federal, State, local communities, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations have submitted more than 3,000 comments for consideration so far, with the final 30-day comment period beginning this week. As this document is distributed for comment, we will again facilitate delivery of this product to the Commonwealth and provide opportunities for comment.

#### *Exercises/Training*

FEMA Region III's exercise officer coordinates our participation in all Federal, State and local exercises, as well as handles our assistance to other agencies in the planning, execution, and evaluation of their exercises. Region III has participated in and facilitated many all-hazards exercises, including oil and hazardous materials spills, agro-terrorism, terrorism, Pandemic and Avian flu planning. One of the most visible and successful exercises was the "2007 Liberty Down."

On February 8, 2007, we joined the Philadelphia Federal Executive Board (FEB), and the Southeastern Pennsylvania Regional Task Force to host "Liberty Down," an exercise designed to test and evaluate the ability of organizations to activate their continuity of operations plans during a natural emergency. The exercise focused on the capability of the Federal community to communicate and work effectively with various State and local agencies responsible for emergency services and safety. Approximately 600 participants 102 State, local, Federal agencies, and the private sector participated in this event—one of the nation's largest and most successful COOP exercises. The FEB and group are already forward to building on this event with a full-scale exercise to follow in 2008. Pittsburgh is currently planning a similar event for 2008.

#### *Mitigation*

On May 1, 2007, Region III's Mitigation Division was restructured to better manage the full range of mitigation programs and to allow the organization to effectively fulfill its response duties. There are now three branches: Risk Analysis; Floodplain Management and Insurance; and Hazard Mitigation Assistance.

Through the Agency's Flood Map Modernization Program and many grant programs, Region III is working diligently to reduce impacts to the region by mitigating risks to life and property.

The Flood Map Modernization program is a collaborative effort between FEMA and its partners to modernize existing Flood Insurance Rate Maps. These flood maps are used to identify and manage flood risk. The goal is to map the areas where 92 percent of America's population lives—covering 65 percent of the land area in the United States. As of today, in Pennsylvania, FEMA has issued effective maps for the counties of Pike, Northampton, Lehigh, Union, Snyder and Lycoming. In 2008, preliminary maps will be released for Montour and Northumberland counties. Soon thereafter, in 2009 and 2010, maps will follow for Wayne, Lackawanna, Susquehanna, Wyoming, and Bradford and Sullivan Counties.

As of FY 2007, FEMA has authority for five Hazard Mitigation Assistance grant programs with unique statutory authorities, program requirements and triggers for funding. The programs are the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM), Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA), Severe Repetitive Loss (SRL), and Repetitive Flood Claims (RFC). They all share a common goal-to assist State and local communities in their efforts to reduce the loss of life and property from natural hazard events.

In Region III, we have approved or are in the process of approving mitigation grants in the following programs:

- Under the HMGP, for the disaster declaration issued on June 30, 2006, due to severe storms and flooding, grant awards totaling \$1,408,609 (Federal Share) have been provided for the acquisition of 23 flood-prone properties in various communities in Lycoming County: Montgomery Borough, Hepburn Township, Loyalsock Township, Old Lycoming Township, Lewis Township, Muncy Creek Township, and Muncy Borough.
- The HMGP for the disaster declaration issued on June 30, 2006, due to severe storms and flooding, as a grant award pending for the acquisition of 14 properties in the Susquehanna County communities of Great Bend Borough, Great Bend Township, New Milford Township, Liberty Township, Hallstead Borough, Franklin Township, Borough of Lanesboro, Oakland Township and Harmony Township. The total for this grant award is \$1,727,160 (Federal Share).
- In the FMA program, we have awarded \$290,475 for an 1-home acquisition project in Hepburn Township, Lycoming County.

- Since 2005, through the PDM program, Region III has approved mitigation-planning grants for \$48,000 in Montour County, \$27,000 in Snyder County and \$171,000 in Lackawanna and Counties.

#### *Gap Analysis*

One major initiative that is at the core of FEMA's preparations for hurricane season is our Gap Analysis tool. Since March, the Agency has been working closely with hurricane-prone States and territories, using a consistent set of measures and tools to evaluate strengths and vulnerabilities. The focus of the assessments is on debris, interim housing, sheltering, evacuation, commodity distribution, medical, communication, and fuel.

Partnerships have been crucial throughout this initiative. Region III deployed task forces specifically to four States, and partnered with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to handle the medical portions of the Gap Analysis and to identify and resolve special medical needs. Also, the Army Corps of Engineers is providing modeling to Region III for 14 storm tracks. While the Commonwealth has not specifically partnered in this project, we hope that Pennsylvania will benefit from some of the information and modeling we are developing. We expect this information to assist us in identifying vulnerable facilities and populations, ensuring shelters and staging areas are in safe locations in all of our States including Pennsylvania.

The old paradigm of waiting for State and local governments to be overwhelmed before providing Federal assistance is a thing of the past. We are now leaning forward to anticipate the needs that the State cannot meet and to fill it them quickly. Over the months since the start of the assessments, our relationships with State agencies (beyond the emergency management agencies) have strengthened tremendously, resulting in greater traction in identifying capabilities and shortfalls. As this assessment tool is further developed into an all hazards program, we anticipate joining in similar efforts with the Commonwealth.

#### **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, I believe Region III is well prepared to respond to major disasters of any kind. Real progress has been made in strengthening the regions, and as a result, we:

- Are better aligned and focused on helping the mid-Atlantic prepare before an event strikes.
- Have stronger operational systems and plans in place to improve response and coordination.
- Are to find new ways to help communities recover and rebuild after an event strikes.
- Are committed to working hand-in-hand with our partners at every level of government as well as those in the nonprofit and private sectors.
- Are dedicated to fostering a culture of personal preparedness.

Ultimately, the new FEMA we are creating will keep the American people better prepared across the spectrum of all hazards, and safer than they were before, and will as well as make our services in partnership with State and local governments and the private sector more reliable and accessible.

Thank you for time, and I look forward to answering your questions.

Mr. CUELLAR. Thank you for your testimony, Mr. Sarubbi. I now recognize Mr. French to summarize his statement for five minutes.

#### **STATEMENT OF GENERAL ROBERT FRENCH, DIRECTOR, PENNSYLVANIA EMERGENCY AGENCY**

Mr. FRENCH. Good morning, Chairman Cuellar and Congressman Dent. On behalf of Governor Rendell, I thank you for the opportunity to discuss Pennsylvania's disaster preparedness, response and recovery programs. My name is Robert French and I am the Director of PEMA.

As we all know, tomorrow marks the anniversary of the tragic events that occurred six years ago in New York City, also at the Pentagon, and certainly right here in Pennsylvania in Somerset County. Very few events in the history of this nation have so dramatically impacted and forever altered our American way of life. The personal freedoms that stood as the foundation of this nation

were compromised and changed. These terrorist attacks also dramatically impacted community preparedness programs nationwide. This sequence of events has forced us to recognize and to address limitations within our first responder programs and emergency preparedness programs overall.

Two weeks ago, Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi marked the second anniversary of Hurricane Katrina, as you well have felt the impact in your local area. The impact of the Category 5 hurricane on the Gulf Coast actually raised questions nationwide regarding our collective ability to respond to and recover from catastrophic disasters.

Mr. Chairman, those two seemingly unrelated events have in common a devastating impact on our communities, the residents, and our first responders. And these two events have dramatically changed emergency preparedness policies and programs at the Federal, State, county, and community level. In many cases these changes are ongoing.

By State government standards, PEMA is a relatively small agency, approximately 160 members. Our overall mission includes developing and administering the Commonwealth's comprehensive, all-hazards emergency preparedness and response program. In order to accomplish this goal, we develop essential partnerships with multiple State and Federal agencies, county and community emergency managers, first responders, elected officials, critical infrastructure providers, and a host of other public and private sector partners who play a vital role in our on-going efforts to ensure public health and safety in our communities. PEMA also employs and deploys the best available technologies in support of that critical mission.

While we are technologically and in some cases programmatically advanced over many other State emergency management agencies, the true key to our success rests with out State and Federal partners, the 67 county emergency management officials, 2,500 plus municipal managers, and more than 100,000 first responders across the State. Our role is to plan, coordinate, and manage the Commonwealth's emergency preparedness program. Its effectiveness is based upon our partners to which great dedication is provided.

While most of our communities face a multitude of potential hazards, as Congressman Dent mentioned earlier, flooding is our number one potential disaster here in Pennsylvania. Since 2004, the Governor proclaimed 10 disaster emergencies and five major disasters were designed by the President releasing Federal disaster assistance for victims in our affected communities. In all, 65 of our 67 counties were included in these Federal declarations and several more than once. More than 60,000 families and businesses were affected, and approximately 2,000 communities lost essential public service and infrastructure needs. The overall estimate of impact exceeded \$500 million.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania with our Federal and local government partners and first responders are also hard at work capabilities to address man-made events. The Regional Counter Terrorism Task Force model was launched in 1998 here in Pennsylvania due to the growing threat and the use of the weapons of

mass destruction. There are nine Regional Task Forces in the Commonwealth. They comprise the 67 counties. Each Task Force meets regularly to discuss plans and procedures for all-hazard preparedness. In order to accomplish this task under the umbrella of the Regional Task Forces we are creating partnerships that include all aspects of our communities, elected officials, first responders, business and industry, hospital and the medical community, education, critical infrastructure, the volunteer community, the news media, and many others are working together to ensure the safety of our neighborhoods.

We are working closely with the Governor's Homeland Security Advisor, and other State agencies involved in homeland security planning and preparedness in order to ensure a coordinated effort at the State, county, and community level exists. Collectively we regularly meet with the Regional Task Forces as we provide and proceed with the implementation plan for Pennsylvania. Since 1999 we have invested more than \$350 million in Federal funds to help our Regional Task Forces acquire equipment, prepare plans, and conduct training and exercises for and with our community first responders. PEMA serves as the State administrative agency and manager to help in this important Task Force program.

The true all-hazards value of the Regional Counter Terrorism Task Forces and their weapons of mass destruction equipment cache was demonstrated at 5:28 a.m. on January 31, 2005, when 13 cars from a Norfolk Southern Railroad train derailed along the Allegheny River in the Creighton section of East Deer in Allegheny County. Four of the cars fell into the river. Two of those tankers that ended up in the river were filled with anhydrous hydrogen fluoride, a caustic concentrated gas that turns into hydrofluoric acid when mixed with water. Hydrogen fluoride can cause burns to the skin and eyes, and may be fatal if inhaled or absorbed through the skin. Responders were fortunate that the cars were under water. That prevented the gas from impacting responders and residents down wind. Local officials said, however, that death tolls could have been very significant had that gas escaped. For the first time all responders at the site were wearing appropriate protective gear to help protect them. In many cases this equipment was purchased by PEMA and shipped to Region 13 through the Regional Task Force in Pittsburgh. The source of the funding was the Federal Terrorism Preparedness Funding that has been provided to us.

Effective communication is one of the greatest challenges to our community emergency response program. Major incidents involve multiple response organizations from many areas. Many use different radio systems on a range of varied frequencies which makes communications and coordination almost impossible. PEMA is working with our 800 MHz statewide radio project system to develop an interoperable communications capability that will allow incident commanders at the scene of a disaster to communicate effectively with all responders. We have installed 800 MHz radios in every 911 center in our counties, and are actively engaged in developing methodology to allow interoperability communications within each county among all first responders.

And finally, we are very aware of the limited funding and need to do more with less. It is our goal to maximize the application of

funding that we do receive, both from State and Federal government. I am confident that by working closely with our partners at the Federal, State, county, and community level, we can support our first responders and protect our communities against the unknown.

At the end of the day, Mr. Chairman, after a lot of hard work and careful investigation in this comprehensive regional program which includes necessary equipment, planning, training and exercises, Pennsylvania's communities are safer and more secure. With your support we will continue to make things even better in Pennsylvania.

It has been a pleasure to address you today. I will be happy to respond to any questions that you might have. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Robert French follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ROBERT P. FRENCH

Congressman Dent and members of the sub-committee on Emergency Communications, Preparedness and Response, on behalf of Governor Rendell, I thank you for this opportunity to discuss Pennsylvania's disaster preparedness, response and recovery programs.

Tomorrow marks the anniversary of the tragic events that occurred six years ago in New York City, the Pentagon and Somerset County Pennsylvania. Very few events in the history of this nation so dramatically impacted and forever altered our American way of life. The personal freedoms that stood as the foundation of this nation were compromised and changed. These terrorist attacks also dramatically impacted community preparedness programs nationwide. And this sequence of events forced us to recognize and address limitations within our first responder and emergency preparedness programs.

Two weeks ago Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi marked the second anniversary of Hurricane Katrina. The impact of this category five hurricane on Gulf Coast communities in these three states raised questions nationwide regarding our collective ability to respond to and recover from catastrophic disasters.

Mr. Chairman, these two seemingly unrelated events have in common a devastating impact on communities, residents and first responders. And these two events have dramatically changed emergency preparedness policies and programs at the federal, state, county and community level. In many cases, these changes are on-going.

By state government standards, PEMA is a small agency with approximately 160 personnel. Our overall mission includes developing and administering the commonwealth's comprehensive, all-hazards emergency preparedness and response program. In order to accomplish this goal, we develop essential partnerships with multiple state and federal agencies, county and community emergency managers, first responders, elected officials, critical infrastructure providers, and a host of other public and private sector partners who play a vital role in our on-going efforts to ensure public health and safety in our communities. PEMA also employs and deploys the best available technologies in support of this critical mission.

For many years, Pennsylvania's emergency management agency and programs have been held in high national regard. We were one of the first emergency management agencies in the nation to integrate first the computer and then satellite technology into our disaster preparedness, tracking and management protocols. PEMA is also one of the few states in the nation to receive national certification, which was the result of peer review reflected against very demanding standards.

While we are technologically and in some cases programmatically advanced over many other state emergency management agencies, the true key to our success rests with our state and federal partners, the 67 county emergency managers, 2,500 plus municipal managers and more than 100,000 first responders across the state. Our role is to plan, coordinate and manage the Commonwealth's emergency preparedness program. Its effectiveness is based in great measure on the dedication and skill of our partners.

It is essential to understand that all disasters occur at the local level. The same holds true for initial disaster response. That is why Pennsylvania aggressively

maintains a comprehensive training and exercise program for all 67 county emergency managers

While most of our communities face a multitude of potential hazards, flooding is the number one disaster potential in Pennsylvania. Permit me take a moment to recap the events of the past three years. Since 2004, the governor proclaimed 10 disaster emergencies and six major floods were designated by the president to receive federal disaster assistance. In all 65 of our 67 counties were included in these federal declarations, several more than once. More than 60,000 families and businesses were affected and approximately 2,000 communities lost essential public infrastructure or services. The overall estimate of impact exceeds \$400 million.

It is important to note that PEMA with our county and community partners are directly involved in supporting and initiating response to disasters and their impact on Pennsylvanians. Last June for example flooding in the northeast triggered more than 1,300 rescues, many by the National Guard and State Police with support from U.S. Coast Guard helicopters.

Once the initial response phase passes, PEMA turns its attention to the recovery phase of the disaster. If the President issues a declaration of major disaster, PEMA and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) establish a Joint Field Office to facilitate the recovery. The primary purpose of the Joint Field Office is to help Pennsylvania residents, living in a disaster-designated county, who suffered damage to get assistance from FEMA and other federal agencies..

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania with our federal and local government partners and first responders are also hard at work developing capabilities to address man-made events. The Regional Counter-Terrorism Task Force model was launched in 1998 due to the growing threat of the use of Weapons of Mass Destruction. There are nine Regional Counter-Terrorism Task Forces comprised of all 67 counties in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Each task force meets regularly to discuss plans and procedures for all-hazards preparedness. The member counties appoint a task force leader and determine who will hold positions in various task force committees. The emphasis for the task force model has been predicated on a "bottoms up" approach with ownership built-in to foster success.

The task forces have several planning assumptions that guide their thinking. These assumptions include: at the start of an event, local resources will be overwhelmed; emergency responsibility lies at the municipal level; significant state response will take at least four hours and significant federal response will take at least eight hours. These planning assumptions require that local and county officials be the initial responders in an incident, while the state though PEMA will provide response resources if requested.

In order to accomplish this task, under the umbrella of the Regional Task Forces, we are creating partnerships that include all aspects of our communities. Elected officials, first responders, business and industry, hospitals and the medical community, education, critical infrastructure, the volunteer community, the news media, and many others are working together to ensure the safety of our neighborhoods.

Mr. Chairman, PEMA maintain 24/7 communications with the counties through their 9-1-1 centers and county emergency management offices. On average about 5,000 incidents are reported to the state's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) every year through the Pennsylvania Emergency Incident Reporting System (PEIRS). PEIRS is a Web-based, software application that provides tools for reporting and managing critical events that affect a variety of agencies and organizations.

We are working closely with the Governor's Homeland Security Advisor, the Pennsylvania State Police, the Department of Health, National Guard, Department of Environmental Protection and Agriculture as well as and other state agencies involved in homeland security planning and preparedness in order to ensure a coordinated effort at the state, county and community level. Collectively we regularly meet with the Regional Task Forces as we proceed with the implementation of Pennsylvania's statewide strategy. The Task Force program was formalized into state law in 2002 and serves as the foundation for the Commonwealth's Counter-Terrorism Preparedness Program.

There are many elements that go into protecting the commonwealth from man-made emergencies. One of the primary keys to keeping the state safe is communication. There must be open lines of communication on all levels of government. The counties must make the state aware of problems and issues they face regarding the goal of protecting the commonwealth. In turn, PEMA and OHS along with other state agencies like the Pennsylvania State Police, Departments of Health, Environmental Protection, Transportation, Military and Veteran's Affairs, Education and Agriculture have a responsibility to offer support to counties so they can more effectively prepare for a potential attack. That support includes assisting county emergency managers to develop plans to minimize threats to our security. Another form

of support comes in the commonwealth's ability to secure federal funding for homeland security initiatives on the state, county and local level. Since 1999, we have invested more than \$400 million in federal funds to help our Regional Task Forces acquire equipment, prepare plans and conduct training and exercises for and with community first responders. PEMA serves as the State Administrative Agency and manages this important program on behalf of the Task Forces and first responders.

While we are making significant progress in helping prepare our communities for response to terrorist events, it is important to remember that we are creating a statewide all-hazards preparedness platform that has application for a wide range of natural and man-made threats.

The true all-hazards value of the Regional Counter-terrorism Task Forces and their Weapons of Mass Destruction equipment cache was demonstrated at 5:28 a.m. on January 31, 2005 when 13 cars of a Norfolk Southern Railroad train derailed along the Allegheny River in the Creighton section of East Deer, Allegheny County. Four of the cars fell into the river. Two of the tanker cars that ended up in the river were filled with anhydrous hydrogen fluoride, a caustic concentrated gas that turns into hydrofluoric acid when mixed with water. Hydrogen fluoride can cause burns to the skin and eyes and may be fatal if inhaled or absorbed through the skin. Responders were fortunate that the cars were under water that prevented the gas from impacting responders and residents down wind. Local officials said that the death toll could have been significant had the gas escaped. For the first time, all responders at the site were wearing appropriate protective gear to help protect them. In many cases this equipment was purchased by PEMA and shipped to Region 13, the RCTTF in Pittsburgh. The source of the funding was federal terrorism preparedness funding.

A number of the elements key to our success are already in place. Effective communications is one of the greatest challenges to our community emergency response program. Major incidents involve multiple response organizations from many areas. Many use different radio systems on a range of varied frequencies, which makes communications and coordination almost impossible. PEMA is working with our 800 MHz radio project staff to develop interoperable communications capabilities, which will allow incident commanders at the scene of a disaster to communicate effectively with all responders. We installed 800 MHz radios in every county 9-1-1 center and are actively engaged in developing methodology to allow inter-operable communications within each county among all first responders.

Working with our federal, county and community partners, we are moving to the next level in the areas of technology applications, data management and information dissemination. Given the challenges we face as a nation, it is imperative that we continue to harness the resources of modern technology as an important tool within our overall preparedness program.

An example of this type of initiative is the dramatic transformation of our statewide satellite-based Emergency Alert System, which began four years ago. With the support of radio and television stations and cable system operators across the state, emergency management officials can alert residents to approaching severe weather conditions or accidents that present threats to community safety. The most common EAS alerts involve flood and tornado warnings. Rail and highway accidents involving dangerous materials as well as accidents in the work place can impact neighborhoods. The EAS program provides elected officials and emergency managers the capability to provide reliable, rapid, widespread public warning.

Directly related to this vital program is Project Amber which allows the State Police to alert area residents when a child has been abducted. With the cooperation and support of the broadcast community, PEMA is converting this statewide network from a less than reliable off-air monitoring system to a state-of-the-art computer controlled interactive digital network.

And finally, we are very aware of the limited funding and need to do more with less. It is our goal to maximize the application of the funding we receive, both from the state and federal government. I am confident that by working closely with our partners at the federal, state, county and community level, we can support our first responders and protect our communities against the unknown.

At the end of the day Mr. Chairman, after a lot of hard work and careful investment in this comprehensive regional program, which includes necessary equipment, planning, training and exercises, Pennsylvania's communities are safer and more secure. With your support, we will continue to make things ever better.

It has been a pleasure addressing you today and I would be happy to respond to questions.

Mr. CUELLAR. Thank you, Mr. French. Thank you for your testimony. I now recognize Mr. Werts to summarize his statement for five minutes.

**STATEMENT OF ROBERT G. WERTS, PROGRAM MANAGER,  
NORTHEAST PENNSYLVANIA REGIONAL COUNTER  
TERRORISM TASK FORCE**

Mr. WERTS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and welcome to Pennsylvania.

Mr. CUELLAR. Thank you.

Mr. WERTS. As you can see at—

Mr. CUELLAR. By the way, I have a brother, you were 35 years in the State Police?

Mr. WERTS. That's correct, sir.

Mr. CUELLAR. Edwin had 30 years in the State Police. He just retired.

Mr. WERTS. He is just a rookie.

Mr. CUELLAR. He is my younger brother. Appreciate that.

Mr. WERTS. As you can see, I have spent almost my entire adult life in service to my nation, my State, and my community. Most of that time the 35 years with the Pennsylvania State Police and, certainly, the last four years with the Northeast Regional Counter Terrorism Force, I have been dealing with public safety and preparedness. The Task Force has accomplished much over the last four to five years. Actually, a great deal more than I can possibly tell you about in the allotted five minutes. So, please, refer to the written statement I have provided for more detail. In addition, I will be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

What I would like to do now is to give you an understanding of how the Task Force is organized, how it operates, some of our accomplishments, and some of the future goals. The Task Force area comprises eight counties in northeast Pennsylvania. Those counties are Carbon, Lackawanna, Lehigh, Monroe, Northampton, Pike, Susquehanna and Wayne County. The Executive Committee is made up of the eight Emergency Management Agency Directors for each county.

The Task Force is further organized in a number of subcommittees representing such areas as hospitals, EMS, mental health, public health agencies, communications, volunteer organizations, such as The American Red Cross, the Salvation Army, and local churches. We have a school committee that is made up of the 46 public and two parochial school districts in the Task Force area, 1200 fire, rescue, and hazmat agencies, law enforcement, urban search and rescue teams, and we have a coroners committee. These committees meet on a monthly basis and discuss equipment, training, and other resources necessary to deal effectively in preventing, mitigating, responding to and recovering from a terrorist event or natural disaster.

The following is only a partial list of some of the equipment that the Task Force has purchased for first responders: 2400 Millennium gas masks for every municipal police officer in the Task Force area, 1200 Positive Air Purifier Respirators and personal protection equipment for police and Emergency Medical Service agencies, 371 GPS systems for EMS unit in the area, four hostage negotiator



phones for SWAT, four bomb robots, two bomb containment vessels, and three trucks to move that equipment tool. Two fully inflatable Surge hospitals with trailer, eight decontamination units, one for each county, and another 18 for each hospital and two command post vehicles.

Just as important as the equipment is the training which we have provided to our first responders. Again, this is only a partial list of some of the training that the agency has taken part in. During 2006 and 1907 a series of six exercises were conducted to test the efficiency and effectiveness of fire, hazmat, EMS, law enforcement, coroners, and hospitals. During the course of the exercise, 3,401 individuals participated in responsive and recovery events. This represents 285 public safety, public health and hospitals, law enforcement, and governmental agencies. The National Tactical Officers Association regularly provides training for law enforcement officers in such areas as terrorism awareness, homicide bombers, crisis negotiation, and others. A separate two-day course of instruction for law enforcement, school personnel, and hospital personnel, in news media relations has also been offered. We feel it is vital that those persons responsible for informing the public during a crisis have the training and the ability to do so properly. NIMS training for municipal officials is on-going and, also, a program dealing with violence in schools, crisis management, and NIMS training has been offered to and presented at a number of public schools.

The planning area; the Task Force has begun planning on a number of possible scenarios that would have a detrimental affect to our area. First is evacuation. While it is necessary to plan on evacuating residents from this area, it is more likely that this region of Pennsylvania would be the location where evacuees from major cities such as New York and Philadelphia would attempt to flee to in the event of a man-made or natural disaster. It is possible that within one hour of a disaster in New York the Pocono Mountains would begin to see a huge increase in traffic. It should be noted that nearly one-third of the population of Monroe County alone now commutes to New York City. This along with other evacuees could cause gridlock on our interstates, much the same as was seen in Texas during Hurricane Katrina. Issues such as interstate highway ramps closures the utilization of tanker trucks to fuel vehicles, staging areas for evacuees to report to prior to their assignments to a specific shelter are just a sampling of subjects presently being discussed in order to formulate an effective plan.

The strategic national stockpile; in the event of a terrorist group attacking with weapons of mass destruction such as chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, or explosive devices, or a major natural disaster, the affected counties within the Task Force area would rapidly deplete the local cached pharmaceuticals and medical equipment. If this occurs it is essential that a re-supply of large quantities of essential medical material be deployed within 12 hours. The Task Force is presently involved in the planning of Points of Distribution or PODs. Locations have been determined and we are presently conducting meetings to identify the persons responsible to ensure the distribution of these medicines is completed within the timeframe set by the Federal Government, the

Center for Disease Control, and the Department of Health and Human Services.

Pandemic influenza; the same responsibilities as mentioned in the previous paragraph will also have to be met with respect to the vaccination of large numbers of people during a pandemic. However, along with the responsibility of ensuring the proper distribution system is in place the Task Force has the added issue that the only facility in the world that manufactures this vaccine is located in our area. In addition to the foregoing preparation the Task Force has also been involved with the manufacturing company, the Department of—the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, State and municipal law enforcement agencies, and others in developing a buffer protection plan and other security measures regarding the transportation, storage, and dispensing of this vaccine.

It should be noted that the Task Force has brought together members of the law enforcement committee, the school committee, hospital committee, along with local public health officials, doctors, nurses, and pharmacists to develop a comprehensive plan to effectively manage the dispensing of medications to a large number of people if either of the above events occur.

Multi-Agency Command Center; the Pocono International Raceway located in Long Pond, Pennsylvania is the site of two NASCAR events during the year. These races, the Pocono 500 and the Pennsylvania 500, each attract in excess of 160,000 people. Due to the potential of a terrorist incident or a natural disaster at the raceway, and at the request of the owner of the track, the Monroe County Office of Emergency Services and the Task Force has assisted the track with developing an emergency plan. As part of that plan the MACC concept is utilized. This concept brings together a number of Federal, State, county and municipal agencies. There are three objectives to the MACC, first to ensure the safety of the fans, spectators, drivers, and all attendees at these events. Secondly to provide a capability of central unified command and control as specified in NIMS. And, finally, to provide a central location for coordination of Federal, State, local, non-governmental, and private sector organizations with primary responsibility for threat response and incident support. Numerous agencies are represented in the MACC and please refer to my written report.

It should be noted that since the participation of the Task Force and the utilization of the MACC concept that NASCAR now considers the Pocono International Raceway one of its most secure sites.

I realize that the goal of this committee is to determine whether or not we are prepared for a natural disaster or terrorist attack. The answer to that question is not a simple yes or no. The truth is as long as we have bad weather, earthquakes, flooding, snowstorms, and the like, and as long as there are persons or groups who hate America and Americans and everything we stand for, preparing will never end.

Six years ago tomorrow the nation found out how prepared we were to deal with these situations. It was further emphasized during Hurricane Katrina and the devastation and death that occurred in the Gulf States. Lessons were learned the hard way. Have we made progress? Yes, by leaps and bounds. Is there more to do?

Definitely yes. The Task Force is equipped and trained agencies to respond to disasters whether man-made or natural. In most instances the cost to train and equip these first responders would have been impossible for these agencies to shoulder. The cooperation between Federal, State, and municipal agencies has improved dramatically. Planning to deal with these crises has been on-going and will continue.

I know that all of this takes a tremendous amount of money and that there is a limit to funding. I would advise caution when determining the amount of funding that is designated to specific areas through the Department of Homeland Security.

While I agree that major cities throughout the nation are more likely to be targeted by terrorists, they are not more likely to be the casualty of a natural disaster. In addition, we have learned here in Pennsylvania rural areas, because of their remoteness and the ability of terrorists to conceal their plotting, are more likely to be chosen to complete their planning.

Bombs or other weapons of mass destruction that accidentally detonate prior to their final delivery point become the problem of that particular municipality. Consequently, rural areas are required to do as much planning to prevent, mitigate, respond to and recover from an attack as urban areas and major cities.

In addition, I am referring now to northeast Pennsylvania, once a terrorist attack or a natural disaster occurs, residents of New York, New Jersey and Philadelphia would most likely evacuate to rural areas of the Commonwealth, in this case, the Pocono Mountains. These evacuees would need food and sheltering for an undetermined amount of time. While emergency services in these cities would be dealing with the aftermath of the attack it will be the rural areas that will be required to deal with the human suffering. Sheltering centers, hospitals and other medical facilities would be overrun. Law enforcement agencies that normally deal with thousands of people would now be dealing with hundreds of thousands if not millions.

Through funding from the Department of Homeland Security our region is more secure and our communities are safer than ever before. For that to continue and improve the programs and funding must continue. There is much more work that needs to be done and it will require additional supplies and training. The first responders in this region are dedicated and hard working, and many of them are volunteers. Our goal needs to be to protect our region and the people who live here, as well as make sure all emergency personnel have the tools they need when disaster strikes.

Once again I would like to express my sincere appreciation for this committee for giving me the opportunity to discuss the Northeast Pennsylvania Regional Counter Terrorism Task Force, our work, our accomplishments and our needs. And if there are any questions I will be happy to respond. Thank you, sir.

[The prepared statement of Robert G. Werts follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ROBERT G. WERTS

Good morning ladies and gentlemen. I would like to thank you for the opportunity to speak here today. I believe it is important that you have at least some knowledge of the individual who sits before you and offers testimony on such a vital issue as Homeland Security.

I have spent my entire adult life in service to my nation, my state and my community. I served 5 years as a Navy Corpsman with the Second Marine Division, which was followed by nearly 35 years as a member of the Pennsylvania State Police, where I rose from Trooper to the rank of Lt. Col. and served as the Deputy Commissioner of Operations. I am presently employed as the Program Manager for the Northeast Pennsylvania Regional Counter Terrorism Task Force (NEPRCTTF).

The NEPRCTTF area comprises eight (8) counties in northeast Pennsylvania. Those counties are Carbon, Lackawanna, Lehigh, Monroe, Northampton, Pike, Susquehanna and Wayne. The Task Force was formed under an Inter Governmental Agreement signed by the governing bodies of each of the counties. Authority is derived from Title 35 and Act 227. The Task Force Executive Committee is comprised of the eight Emergency Management Agency Directors in each county.

The Task Force is further organized in a number of sub-committees. Those committees are:

**Hospitals**—which represent the 18 hospitals in the task force area; the EMS work Group; Mental Health agencies and the Public Health work group which includes The Pennsylvania Department of Health and the Municipal Health Bureaus

**Communications**—The 911 Directors of each county along with the Communications Utility Group make up this sub-committee.

**Support Services Committee**—is comprised of Volunteer Organizations, such as The American Red Cross, the Salvation Army and various churches in the area.

**School Committee**—this is made up of the 46 public and 2 parochial school districts.

**Fire/Rescue/Hazmat Committee**—over 1200 fire, rescue and hazmat agencies are represented by this committee.

**Law Enforcement Committee**—comprised of members of Federal Law Enforcement Agencies, the Pennsylvania State Police and nearly 150 municipal law enforcement agencies, corrections officials, sheriffs departments, bomb squads and Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) Teams.

**The Urban Search and Rescue**—a complete company trained and equipped that exactly mirrors the FEMA Team and consists of 33 members is available to respond within the Commonwealth when needed.

**Coroners**—comprised by the eight county coroners.

The committees meet on a monthly basis for the purpose of discussing equipment, training and other resources necessary to deal effectively in preventing, mitigating, responding to or recovering from a terrorist event or natural disaster.

#### **EQUIPMENT**

It is vital that our first responders are properly equipped and trained. If I may I would like to provide this committee with a partial list of some of the equipment that the Task Force has provided to first responders.

2400 Millennium Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear (CBRN) Gas Mask Kits for every police officer in the Task Force area.

1200 Positive Air Purifier Respirators (PAPR) with Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) for police and EMS agencies.

9 Hostage Negotiator Phone Sets for the area Police SWAT Teams.

4 Bomb Robots, 2 Bomb Containment vessels and 3 trucks to move this equipment.

2 fully equipped inflatable "Surge" hospitals, with trailers.

8 complete Decontamination Units, one for each county. 32 Fire Companies are in the process of being trained to use this equipment. In addition decontamination units have been purchased for all 18 hospitals in the area.

The equipment necessary to stand up one complete USAR Team.

2 Command Post buses.

Equipment necessary for the eight (8) county coroners to deal with an incident involving mass casualties.

371 GPS systems for each EMS Unit in the area.

#### **TRAINING**

This is, as I mentioned, only a partial list of equipment that the Task Force has provided to first responders. Just as important as the equipment is the training which we provide to these agencies.

We recently concluded a series of six "Exercises" to test the efficiency and effectiveness of fire, hazmat, EMS, Law Enforcement, Coroners and Hospitals. The Task Force retained Cocciardi and Associates, Inc. to develop, present and evaluate a series of county based full scale counter-terrorism exercises during 2006-07. A validated Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) terrorism scenario was developed

through the use of a mock terrorist group. This scenario was then applied to each NEPRCTTF county. During the course of the exercises, 3,401 individuals participated in response and recovery events, representing 285 public safety, public health and hospitals, law enforcement and governmental agencies. Two-hundred seventy-five (275) critical tasks were reviewed and evaluated representing more than 1,600 required actions during the series of exercises. One hundred twenty-five (125) improvement actions were recommended and four (4) best practices were noted.

In addition to the foregoing the National Tactical Officers Association regularly provides training in such areas as:

- Terrorism Tactics—Homicide Bombers
- Terrorism Intelligence Profiles
- Protective Operations—Dignitary Protection
- Basic SWAT Training
- Basic Crisis Negotiations
- Hostage Rescue Training
- Tactical Emergency Medical Support
- Critical Incident Management
- High Risk Transport—Corrections
- Advanced Crisis Negotiations
- Workplace Violence—Response

All 18 hospitals have upgraded their required personnel to Hazmat Technician level through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) training.

A separate two day course of instruction for Law Enforcement, School Personnel and Hospital Personnel in News Media Relations has been offered to insure those persons having the responsibility of informing the public, during a crisis, have the training and ability to do so properly.

Training in the National Incident Management System (NIMS) has been attended by municipal/public officials.

A program dealing with Violence in Schools in conjunction with Crisis Management and NIMS training has been offered to and presented at a number of the public schools in the task force area.

### **PLANNING**

The Task Force has begun planning on a number of possible scenarios that would have a detrimental affect on the area.

**Evacuation**—while it is necessary to plan on evacuating residents from this area, it is more likely that this region of Pennsylvania would be the location where evacuees from the major cities, New York and Philadelphia, would attempt to flee to in the event of man-made or natural disaster. It is possible that within one hour of a disaster in New York, the Pocono Mountains would begin to see a huge increase in traffic. It should be noted that nearly one-third of the population of Monroe County now commutes to New York City. This along with other evacuees could cause “grid-lock” on our Interstates, much the same as was seen in Texas during Hurricane Katrina. Issues such as Interstate Highway ramp closures, the utilization of tanker trucks to fuel vehicles and staging areas for evacuees to report to prior to their assignment to a specific shelter are just a sampling of subjects presently being discussed in order to formulate an effect plan.

**Strategic National Stockpile**—in the event of a terrorist group attacking with weapons of mass destruction, such as chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, or explosive devices, or a major natural disaster, the affected counties within the task force area will rapidly deplete the local cached pharmaceuticals and medical equipment. If this occurs it is essential that a re-supply of large quantities of essential medical material be deployed within twelve hours. In counties that have no Department of Health it falls to the Director of Emergency Services or the EMA Director to have in place a plan for the distribution of these medical materials. The task force is presently involved in the planning of Points of Distribution (PODs). Locations have been determined and we are presently conducting meetings to identify the persons responsible to insure the distribution of these medicines is completed within the time frame set by the Federal Government, the Center for Disease Control and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

**Pandemic Influenza**—the same responsibilities as mentioned in the previous paragraph will also have to be met with respect to the vaccination of large numbers of people during a pandemic. However along with the responsibility of insuring the proper distribution system is in place, the NEPRCTTF has the added issue *that the only facility in the world that manufactures this vaccine is located within our area.* In addition to the foregoing preparations, the task force has also been involved with the manufacturing company, the Department of Homeland Security, state and municipal law enforcement and others in developing a buffer protection plan and other

security measures regarding the transportation, storage and dispensing of this vaccine.

**\*Note:** It should be noted that the Task Force has brought together members of Law Enforcement Committee, the School Committee, the Hospital Committee along with local public health officials, doctors, nurses and pharmacists to develop a comprehensive plan to effectively manage the dispensing of medications to a large number of people if either of the above events occurs.

**Multi-Agency Command Center (MACC)**—The Pocono International Raceway (PIR), located in Long Pond, PA is the site of two NASCAR events during the year. These races, the Pocono 500 and the Pennsylvania 500, each attract in excess of one hundred and sixty thousand people (160,000). Due to the potential of a terrorist incident or a natural disaster at the raceway, and at the request of the owner of PIR, the Monroe County Office of Emergency Services (OES) and the NEPRCTTF has assisted the PIR with developing an Emergency Plan. As part of that plan the MACC concept is utilized. This concept brings together a number of federal, state, county and municipal agencies. There are three objectives of the MACC. They are: To insure the safety of the fans, spectators, drivers and all attendees at these events; To provide capability for Central Unified Command and Control as specified in NIMS and; To provide a central location for coordination of federal, state, local, non-governmental and private sector organizations with primary responsibility for threat response and incident support. The following is a list of the agencies represented at the MACC.

**Federal:** Federal Bureau of Investigation, Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, Environmental Protection Agency, Federal Aviation Agency, Department of Homeland Security, Civil Support Team, the FBI's Law Enforcement On-Line (LEO).

**State:** Pennsylvania State Police, Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, Office of Homeland Security, Eastern Pennsylvania Regional EMS Council.

**County:** Monroe County Office of Emergency Services, Monroe County 911 Center, Monroe County Planning Commission, Carbon County Office of Emergency Services, Urban Search and Rescue-PA Company Three.

**Municipal:** Pocono Mountain Regional Police Department, Tunkhannock Volunteer Fire Department, Tunkhannock Township Emergency Management Agency.

***It should be noted that since the participation of the NEPRCTTF and the utilization of the MACC concept that NASCAR now considers the Pocono International Raceway one of its most secure sites.***

We are also pleased to report the Communication Committee recently completed a project consisting of connecting the eight county 911 centers together via secure microwave radio connectivity. By design they used a majority of existing infrastructure which was already in-place and owned by the eight counties. In addition we partnered with the Eastern Pennsylvania Emergency Medical Services Council's "Medcom" system and the Pennsylvania Game Commission.

Since we used the existing infrastructure this allowed us to expand the connection beyond our region and now we have direct and secure communications with: Berks and Schuylkill Counties as well as access to sixteen hospitals and seven aero-medical helicopter programs through Medcom.

Furthermore there was a communications network created for the eight county emergency management officials so they too would have a secure communications link. The system is used on a daily basis for any and all situations which require interaction between counties and/or regions.

It seems the main question that the members of this committee are most interested in hearing an answer to is, "How prepared is Pennsylvania to Respond to a Terrorist Attack or Natural Disaster?"

Six years ago tomorrow the nation found out how prepared we were to deal with these situations. It was further emphasized during hurricane Katrina and the devastation and death that occurred in the Gulf States. Lessons were learned, the hard way. Have we made progress? Yes, by leaps and bounds. Is there more to do? Definitely yes! The task force has equipped and trained agencies to respond to disasters, whether man made or natural. In most instances the cost to train and equip these first responders would have been impossible for these agencies to shoulder. The co-operation between federal, state and municipal agencies has improved dramatically. Planning to deal with these crises has been on-going and will continue.

I realize that all of this takes a tremendous amount of money and that there is a limit to funding. I would advise caution when determining the amount of funding that is designated to specific areas through Department of Homeland Security.

While I agree that major cities throughout the nation are more likely to be targeted by terrorists, they are not more likely to be the casualty of a natural disaster. In addition, as we have learned here in Pennsylvania, rural areas, because of their remoteness and the ability of terrorists to conceal their plotting, are more likely to be chosen to complete their planning.

Bombs or other weapons of mass destruction that accidentally detonate prior to their final delivery point become the problem of that particular municipality. Consequently rural areas are required to do as much planning to prevent, mitigate, respond to and recover from such an attack as urban areas and major cities.

In addition, and I am referring to Northeastern Pennsylvania at this point, once a terrorist attack or a natural disaster occurs, residents of New York, New Jersey and Philadelphia would most likely evacuate to the rural areas of the Commonwealth. In this case the Pocono Mountains. These evacuees would need food and sheltering for an undetermined amount of time. While emergency services in these cities would be dealing with the aftermath of the attack, it will be the rural areas that will be required to deal with the human suffering. Sheltering centers, hospitals and other medical facilities, would be overrun. Law Enforcement agencies that normally deal with thousands of people would now be dealing with hundreds of thousands if not millions.

Through funding from the Department of Homeland Security our region is more secure and our communities are safer than ever before. For that to continue and improve, the programs and funding must continue. There is much more work that needs to be done, and it will require additional supplies and training. The first responders in this region are dedicated and hard working, and many of them are volunteers. Our goal needs to be: to protect our region and the people who live here as well as to make sure all emergency personnel have the tools they need when disaster strikes.

Once again I would like to express my sincere appreciation to this committee for giving me the opportunity to discuss the Northeast Pennsylvania Regional Counter Terrorism Task Force, our work, our accomplishments and our needs.

Mr. CUELLAR. Thank you, Mr. Werts, for your testimony. At this time I now recognize Ms. Marrocolo to summarize her statement for five minutes.

**STATEMENT OF MARYANN E. MARROCOLO, DEPUTY  
MANAGING DIRECTOR, EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, CITY OF  
PHILADELPHIA**

Ms. MARROCOLO. Thank you. Good morning, Mr. Chairman and Congressman Dent. I want to thank you for the opportunity to testify on the important subject of emergency preparedness in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

My name is MaryAnn Marrocolo and I am the Deputy Managing Director for Emergency Management in the City of Philadelphia. I have been in this position since November of 2006. Prior to that I was the Assistant Commissioner for Planning with the New York City Office of Emergency Management where I worked from 1999 until 2006.

Today I am going to discuss with you the importance of developing detailed operational plans to support emergency response, focusing specifically on evacuation. I will discuss with you why plans fails, offer you an approach to planning that can minimize these failures, and describe how this approach is being applied in the City of Philadelphia.

First I want to focus on operational planning. I will now read to you several excerpts from after action reports that highlight some of the issues with planning for and coordinating a large-scale response operation. And I am only going to discuss two or three. There are several in my written testimony. Command and control were impaired at all levels of government. Another example would be a general lack of knowledge by key individuals and agencies

concerning the incident management system, disaster response, and recovery planning and implementation, and emergency management functions in general led to coordination—led to confusion and frustration among responding agencies. There was a failure to heed past lessons learned from exercises and actual events. The response lacked the kind of integrated communication and unified command contemplated in the directive both within and among individual agencies. And finally, most senior management and elected officials interviewed were well distanced from, and in some cases ignorant of salient pieces of the plan. These are from after action reports dating as far back as Hurricane Andrew, and any of these items could have come from any of those reports.

These examples of post-disaster hindsight bring to light three key issues with emergency planning. Number one, plans do not clearly define roles and responsibilities. Number two, key decision-makers and response personnel are often distanced from and, therefore, unaware of the plans they are expected to execute. And number three, plans fail to adequately communicate to the end user what is to be done.

We must end the practice of learning the same lessons at every disaster, but how? The increasingly complex emergencies we face require plans that clearly articulate options, roles and tasks. First, plans must be simplified. Too often they are wordy and conceptual, failing to answer the basic who, what, when, where and how that is essential to organize and execute a response. Second, plans must be organized into strategies that link options and tasks. Third, plans must link roles to tasks beyond the boots on the ground response. This means that all roles, whether they are executives, emergency managers, personnel in the Emergency Operations Center, personnel operating at the scene, and personnel operating at agencies behind the scenes need to be clearly defined and connected together in the plan. Plans should not be written by a planner locked in an office for days on end. Plans must be developed through an inclusive and collaborative process that is highly organized and structured.

Following Hurricane Katrina, Mayor John F. Street challenged leaders inside and outside of government to closely the ability of Philadelphia to respond to and recover from a catastrophic disaster. Following an exhaustive study the Mayor's Emergency Preparedness Review Committee released a report detailing over 200 recommendations to close identified gaps in preparedness. Today I have provided you a copy of the executive summary of that report and a full copy of the report on a CD in a packet that should be in front of you. This inclusive and important task and transparent look at the city's emergency preparedness should be commended and replicated. It is not often that those in power turn the microscope on themselves to not just tout what is done well but what needs improvement, and then follow-up with funding to implement the needed changes.

I would now like to focus attention on the issue of evacuation planning. There are two types of evacuations, no-notice and forecasted. No-notice evacuations are dynamic events where the hazard, safe areas, and protective actions are unknown until the time of the event. Forecasted evacuations are essentially the opposite.



Regardless of the type of evacuation, people in danger and some who are not but perceive they are will evacuate on foot, by car, or by bus, subway, or rail if it is available to them. Depending on the type of incident some modes of transit may not be available which will shift demand. For example, in New York City one of the things that we often saw is that when the subway became unavailable people would shift their transit to the ferry system. So plans must be able to accommodate for the shift in demand.

Thus evacuation plans must address all hazards, be flexible and scalable to the event. Further, these plans must be coordinated and connected across agencies to provide the greatest flexibility should one or more modes of transit become unavailable. Finally, evacuation plans must be regional in nature as evacuees often do not stop at the invisible political boundary.

In April 2007 the Philadelphia Office of Emergency Management launched a project to develop a Citywide Evacuation Plan, the foundation of which is identifying evacuations routes. To ensure the routes were operationally sound and addressed the needs of those that would use them as well as those that would have to manage them, a work group was formed that included representatives from the public safety and transportation agencies, as well as community members and the private sector.

Through this work group we have successfully identified evacuation zones and routes for emergency vehicles, pedestrians, and mass transit vehicles, and private vehicles. In conjunction with this we have undertaken two projects to develop tactical evacuation plans, one for our Sports Complex Special Services District and one to coordinate high-rise building evacuation. Both of these projects were done in the same manner as identifying the routes, by bringing together the right people and utilizing a structured process to achieve a result. Currently, we have arranged the first meeting with our partners in New Jersey to broaden the scope of our routing efforts.

Within southeastern Pennsylvania, Philadelphia is part of the Southeastern Regional Counter Terrorism Task Force. This Task Force is also working to coordinate evacuation plans across jurisdictions in the State of Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware.

In conclusion, developing sound operational plans is essential to an organized and coordinated emergency response. The planning process I described above produces documents that clearly articulate options, roles and tasks, and resonate with the personnel charged with implementing them. Coupled with this is the buy-in necessary for the plan to work. This process is being actively employed by the City of Philadelphia in the development of the Citywide Evacuation Plan as well as many other plans.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am happy to answer any questions that you may have.

[The prepared statement of MaryAnn E. Marrocolo follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARYANN E. MARROCOLO

***Opening***

Good morning Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee. I want to thank you for the opportunity to testify on the important subject of emergency preparedness in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

My name is MaryAnn Marrocolo and I am the Deputy Managing Director for Emergency Management in the City of Philadelphia. I have been in this position since November 2006. Prior to that, I was the Assistant Commissioner for Planning with the New York City Office of Emergency Management where I worked from 1999 until 2006.

Today I am going to discuss with you the importance of developing detailed operational plans to support emergency response, focusing specifically on evacuation. I will discuss with you why plans fail, offer you an approach to planning that can minimize these failures, and describe how this approach is being applied to evacuation planning in Philadelphia.

### ***Part 1—Operational Planning***

I will now read to you excerpts from several after action reports that highlight some of the issues with planning for and coordinating a large-scale response operation:

- There was a failure to have a single person in charge with a clear chain of command
- Command and Control was impaired at all levels of government
- There was an inability to cut through bureaucratic red tape
- A general lack of knowledge by key individuals and agencies, concerning the Integrated Emergency Management System, disaster response/recovery planning and implementation, and emergency management functions in general, led to confusion and frustration among responding agencies
- Leaders were not well versed in protocol and therefore failed to successfully implement the National Response Plan, and with it, the National Incident Management System
- There was a failure to heed past lessons learned from exercises and actual events
- The response operation lacked the kind of integrated communications and unified command contemplated in the directive, both within and among individual responding agencies
- Information that was crucial to informed decision-making was not shared among agencies
- Most senior management and elected officials interviewed were well distanced from, and in some cases ignorant of, salient pieces of the plans

These examples of post-disaster hindsight bring to light three key issues with emergency planning:

1. Plans do not clearly define roles and responsibilities
2. Key decision-makers and response personnel are too distanced from and therefore unaware of the plans they are expected to execute
3. Plans fail to adequately communicate to the “end user” what is to be done

We must end the practice of learning the same lessons at every disaster, but how?

The increasingly complex emergencies we face require plans that clearly articulate options, roles and tasks.

First, plans must be simplified. Too often, they are wordy and conceptual; failing to answer the basic who, what, when, where, and how that is essential to organize and execute a response.

Second, plans must be organized into strategies that link options and tasks.

Third, plans must link roles to tasks—beyond the “boots on the ground response.”

This means that all roles, whether they are executives, emergency managers, personnel in the Emergency Operations Center, personnel operating at the scene, and personnel operating at agencies behind the scenes need to be clearly defined and connected together in the plan.

Plans should not be written by a planner locked in an office for days on end. Plans must be developed through an inclusive and collaborative process that is highly organized and structured.

### ***Part 2—Evacuation Planning***

I would now like to focus attention on the issue of evacuation planning. There are two types of evacuations: no-notice and forecasted. No-notice evacuations are dynamic events where the hazard, safe areas, and protective actions are unknown until the time of the event. Forecasted evacuations are essentially the opposite.

Regardless of the type of evacuation, people in danger (and some who are not, but perceive they are) will evacuate on foot, by car, or by bus, subway, or rail. Depending on the type of incident, some modes of transit may not be available, which will shift demand.

Thus, evacuation plans must address all hazards, be flexible, and be scalable to the event. Further, these plans must be coordinated and connected across agencies

to provide the greatest flexibility should one or more modes of transit become unavailable. Finally, evacuation plans must be regional in nature as evacuees often do not stop at the invisible political boundary.

In April 2007 the Philadelphia Office of Emergency Management launched a project to develop a Citywide Evacuation Plan, the foundation of which is identifying evacuation routes. To ensure the routes were operationally sound and addressed the needs of those that would use them as well as those that would have to manage them, a Work Group was formed that included representatives from public safety and transportation agencies as well as community members and the private sector.

Through the Work Group, we have systematically identified evacuation zones and routes for emergency vehicles, pedestrians and mass transit, and private vehicles.

In conjunction with this, we have undertaken two projects to develop tactical evacuation plans: one for the Sports Complex Special Services District and one to coordinate high-rise building evacuation. Both of these projects were done in the same manner as identifying the routes: by bringing together the right people and utilizing a structured process to achieve a result.

Currently, we have arranged the first meeting with our partners in New Jersey to broaden the scope of our routing efforts.

Within Southeastern Pennsylvania, Philadelphia is part of the Regional Counter-terrorism Task Force. The Task Force is also working to coordinate evacuation plans across multiple jurisdictions in the state of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware.

#### **Summary**

In conclusion, developing sound operational plans is essential to an organized and coordinated emergency response. The planning process I described above produces documents that clearly articulate options, roles, and tasks and resonate with the personnel charged with implementing them. Coupled with this, is the buy-in that is necessary for the plan to work.

This process is being actively employed by the City of Philadelphia in development of the Citywide Evacuation Plan, the first step being identifying evacuation zones and routes.

Once again thank you for the opportunity to testify, I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Mr. CUELLAR. Thank you very much, Ms. Marrocolo. At this time I would like to recognize Mr. Paul to summarize his statement for five minutes.

#### **STATEMENT OF R. CHADWICK PAUL, JR., PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, BEN FRANKLIN TECHNOLOGY PARTNERS OF NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA**

Mr. PAUL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and good morning. And good morning, Charlie. My name is Chad Paul and I am President and Chief Executive Officer of the Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Northeastern Pennsylvania. I appreciate your inviting me to testify today. I appreciate the opportunity to share our efforts regarding business preparedness as it relates to the financial services arena.

In the wake of the September 11 attacks, the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Federal Reserve recommended that financial services firms develop more reliable backup operations outside the New York City power grid, watershed and geographic proximity. Far enough from New York City to meet the SEC recommendations, yet close enough for the industry required synchronous data transfer. The northeast Pennsylvania region is uniquely situated to provide a complete backup of the New York financial markets in the event of another disaster.

Governor Rendell submitted a Wall Street West proposal for northeast Pennsylvania in 2006 to the U.S. Department of Labor and the Workforce Investment for Regional Economic Development or WIRED grant was awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor to

Ben Franklin Technology Partners in January of 1906. Wall Street West has become a \$40 million initiative and is managed by Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Northeast Pennsylvania. It involves a variety of Federal, State and private funding sources. Nearly 15 million in state funds are leveraging up to 25 million in Federal and private investments.

The Workforce Development piece will help northeastern Pennsylvania create the talent pool of workers for skills that will be needed by the financial services industry as they move facilities to Pennsylvania. The four-year Federal WIRED grant includes nine counties and provides workforce development initiatives to support both business attraction as well as training. The Wall Street West project will develop career ladders and incumbent worker training to help those workers advance.

Synchronous data transfer between the primary and backup sites is requisite for many financial services companies. Another part of Wall Street West, the construction and the deployment of high-speed fiber optic connectivity from lower Manhattan to northeast Pennsylvania, will provide the necessary infrastructure for the region's well-trained workforce. In June 2007 Governor Rendell along with Wall Street West, announced an agreement with Level 3 Communications to build this fiber optic network.

We are creating a fiber network that will meet the requirements of one of the most demanding information technology environments in the world; the safe and secure transmittal of America's financial transactions, all at incredible speed.

While providing better connectivity with New York and northeast Pennsylvania we will also interconnect with an already robust fiber optic infrastructure that covers all nine counties included in the Wall Street West initiative, including Carbon, Berks, Lackawanna, Lehigh, Luzerne, Monroe, Northampton, Pike and Wayne Counties.

Ben Franklin and its partners have leveraged Federal and State grants to fund the Wall Street West fiber optic infrastructure. The funding sources included \$1,000,000 from the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration with a check that was presented by Charlie and Assistant Secretary Sandy Baruah from Economic Development Administration, as well as grants from various State funding sources like the Ben Franklin Technology Development Authority, the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, and the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry.

One example of an early success is SECCAS LLC, which is the leading provider of compliance solutions for financial firms in New York, relocated its backup and disaster recovery facilities to Scranton in April 2007, and they are expected to create at least 10 well-paying jobs in Lackawanna County.

When not managing Wall Street West I run Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Northeast Pennsylvania. We link companies with universities, funding, and other resources to help them prosper in today's technology-based economic innovation society. We were created by the Commonwealth in 1983 to play a leadership role in strengthening regional economies, building the State's technology economy, and creating and retaining high-wage, high-skilled jobs. I am pleased to say we worked closely with Congressman

Dent when in his role in the State House and in the State Senate when he served there.

Since 1983, Ben Franklin has started over 360 companies, developed almost 700 products and services, created almost 12,000 new jobs, and retained almost 20,000 new jobs.

It has been my pleasure to have the opportunity to testify for you and I welcome the committee's questions.

[The prepared statement of R. Chadwick Paul, Jr., follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF R. CHADWICK PAUL, JR.

Good morning, Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee. My name is Chad Paul and I am President and Chief Executive Officer of Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Northeastern Pennsylvania. Thank you for inviting me to testify today. I appreciate the opportunity to share our efforts regarding business preparedness as it relates to the financial services arena.

**WALL STREET WEST**

**Overview**

In the wake of the September 11th attacks, the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Federal Reserve recommended that financial services firms develop reliable backup operations outside the New York City power grid, watershed and geographic proximity. Far enough from New York City to meet SEC recommendations, yet close enough for synchronous data transfer, the Northeastern PA region is uniquely situated to provide a complete backup of the New York financial markets in the event of another disaster.

Governor Ed Rendell submitted a "Wall Street West" proposal for northeastern Pennsylvania in 2006, and the Workforce Investment for Regional Economic Development (WIRED) grant was awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor Education and Training Administration to the Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Northeastern Pennsylvania. Wall Street West is a \$40 million initiative, managed by the Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Northeastern Pennsylvania, involving a variety of federal, state and private-funding sources. Nearly \$15 million in state funds are leveraging up to \$25 million in federal and private investments.

**Workforce Development**

The WIRED grant will help northeastern Pennsylvania to create a talent pool of workers with skills for the financial services industry. The three-year federal WIRED grant involves nine counties and provides workforce development initiatives to support business attraction in the financial services sector, as well as other technology-based sectors. The Wall Street West project will develop career ladders and incumbent worker training to help workers advance.

**Fiber Connectivity**

Synchronous data transfer between primary and backup sites is requisite for many financial services companies. Another part of Wall Street West, the construction and deployment of high-speed fiber optic connectivity from lower Manhattan to northeastern Pennsylvania, will provide the necessary infrastructure for the region's well-trained workforce. In June 2007, Gov. Rendell, along with Wall Street West, announced an agreement for Level 3 Communications (Nasdaq: LVL3) to build this fiber optic network.

"We analyzed and compared a number of proposals, and negotiated with vendors to obtain the best possible price without sacrificing the best-of-class performance and quality that our financial services prospects will demand," said Chad Paul, Ben Franklin President and CEO at the announcement event. "We are creating a fiber network that must meet the requirements of one of the most demanding information technology environments in the world: the safe and secure transmittal of America's financial transactions, all at incredible speed."

While providing better connectivity between New York and northeastern Pennsylvania, the Wall Street West fiber network will also interconnect with an already robust fiber-optic infrastructure that covers all nine counties covered by the Wall Street West initiative, including Carbon, Berks, Lackawanna, Lehigh, Luzerne, Monroe, Northampton, Pike and Wayne.

"Northeastern Pennsylvania is already home to a number of financial firms, and this initiative is essential to continuing the area's advancement and economic growth," said Gov. Rendell. "It will also strengthen New York City's status as the financial capital of the world by providing firms there with mission-critical data back-up."

**Funding the Infrastructure Ben Franklin and its partners leveraged federal and state grants to fund the Wall Street West fiber optic infrastructure:**

- U.S. Economic Development Administration  
Engineering and Design Planning for Infrastructure  
\$1,000,000 total awarded  
Sandy K. Baruah, Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development, and U.S. Representative Charles W. Dent presented two checks to the Ben Franklin Technology Partners on May 29, 2007 for the Wall Street West Fiber Network. Congressman Dent advocated for the grant application for high-speed fiber optic connectivity that was submitted by BFTP/NEP. This connectivity will provide the necessary infrastructure for synchronous data transmittal between New York City and northeastern Pennsylvania. Ben Franklin is leading the creation of this fiber network, and this grant is the first federal grant funding of the fiber network.
- Ben Franklin Technology Development Authority  
Infrastructure for Fiber Connectivity  
\$3,000,000 total awarded for 2006—07 and 2007—08
- Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development Community Conservation Program  
Fiber for Wall Street West  
\$500,000 total awarded through June 2009
- Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development World Trade PA  
Fiber for Wall Street West  
\$3,000,000 total awarded through June 2010

**Early Success: SECCAS**

SECCAS LLC, the leading provider of compliance solutions for financial firms, relocated to Scranton in April 2007, and is expected to create at least 10 well-paying jobs in Lackawanna County within three years. "These jobs could have gone to New York, New Jersey or Maryland," Gov. Rendell said. "This project is another great example of how our competitive business environment and strategic investments are working to grow our economy."

For more information about the Wall Street West initiative, visit [www.wallstreetwest.org](http://www.wallstreetwest.org).

**About the Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Northeastern Pennsylvania**

The Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Northeastern Pennsylvania (BFTP/NEP) links Pennsylvania companies with universities, funding, and other resources to help them prosper in today's knowledge-based economy through innovation. The Center is a non-profit corporation that is part of a four-center, state-funded economic development initiative. The Ben Franklin program was created by the Commonwealth in 1983 to play a leadership role in strengthening regional economies, building the state's technology economy, and creating and retaining high-wage, high-skilled jobs.

BFTP/NEP's strategy encompasses three key areas:

1. Developing early-stage, technology-oriented companies;
2. Helping established manufacturers creatively apply new technology and business practices; and
3. Promoting an innovative community-wide infrastructure that fosters a favorable business environment for high-growth companies.

Since 1983, the Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Northeastern Pennsylvania has achieved the following results:

- Started 366 new companies
- Developed 698 new products and processes
- Created 11,648 new jobs
- Retained 19,622 existing jobs

The northeastern center is headquartered on the campus of Lehigh University, Bethlehem, and at regional offices in Wilkes-Barre, Lewisburg, and Reading. Visit [www.nep.benfranklin.org](http://www.nep.benfranklin.org)

Mr. CUELLAR. Thank you, Mr. Paul, for your testimony and I want to thank all the witnesses for their testimony. At this time what the panel will do is we will ask some questions. I will start off with some questions for each of the panel and then pass it on to the Ranking Member. So if you would allow me I will start off with Mr. Sarubbi. Can you, we understand now that the National

Response Plan which is now being called the National Response Framework has been delayed and they have been—there has been some concern by some of the State and local emergency managers about the level of input. Could you answer two—one question with two parts, how is FEMA working to ensure that the State and local input has been included in the final draft, number one. And number two, what sort of direction are the State and local governments going to be given under this framework?

Mr. SARUBBI. Certainly, Mr. Chairman, as you know since September of 2006 the National Response Plan has undergone a considerable revision. We have had over 700 people representing Federal, State and local governments, as well as the private sector and NGO's given an opportunity to comment on the plan and to be involved in the changes that are made to it.

As we speak the plan is being rolled out for additional comment, for a 30-day comment period actually starting today. This plan as a result of the changes that it has undergone is now being called the National Response Framework. These changes are made to better align the document with its purpose to guide unification of national response efforts. Our Congressional Affairs folks will be happy to brief the committee on the changes that have taken place with the plan and our intended course of action for now. Essentially, the National Response Framework will be opened for public comment for 30 days, and Federal, State, local officials will be given opportunity to comment and provide feedback and that could result in additional changes to the document.

Mr. CUELLAR. Okay. But here in your area you have given the local folks the opportunity to get that input of reaching out. I mean we can open it up but we are reaching out to them to make sure they get actively involved.

Mr. SARUBBI. Yes, sir, we will promote and advise people of this additional comment period and they will be given ample opportunity not only through the Federal Register but also efforts that we will make within the region to make sure that all of our folks who are in the region have that opportunity to comment on it.

Mr. CUELLAR. Okay. Thank you, sir. Mr. French, as you know the presence of high-risk, critical infrastructure in the State or open area is a major factor in determining risk-based funding allocations. Under the State Homeland Security Grants program and the Program Area Security Initiative, can you please describe the consultation process that your State undergoes with Homeland Security to identify the lists of those critical infrastructure?

Mr. FRENCH. Yes, sir, Mr. Chairman. The Office of Homeland Security and our office Emergency Management Agency have worked together. We have a four-pillar approach in Pennsylvania which includes our Pennsylvania State Police, as well. But through the Office of Homeland Security we have identified over 200 critical infrastructure pieces in the Commonwealth. And from that what we have done is worked through the investment justifications for the grants for this particular year, and we have made a change to the way we had previously issued grant monies, and that includes the critical infrastructure. This year we are taking a percentage of the overall grants applying it to critical infrastructure. Also, as you know, the UASCs get their own specific slice of that particular

grant program but we are trying to ensure that both per capita and critical infrastructure are primary considerations in our award of the grants. And that is an evolution that is going on here in Pennsylvania.

Mr. CUELLAR. Okay. Thank you. Mr. Werts, the communications between police and fire departments in northeastern Pennsylvania is very important as it is in any part of the country. Could you tell us what efforts are under way to improve the ability to communicate during an emergency and how those efforts are being funded?

Mr. WERTS. Yes, sir. First of all, we are dealing with the 800 MHz system and trying to implement a great deal of that. In addition, in my written testimony I think there is an entire statement in there regarding some of the issues that our communication committee has looked at with respect to trying to implement cross communications between various agencies including hospitals, if you will. That has been met with a certain amount of success so far. It is something that is utilized on an ongoing basis. We have a system in place now where at least the EMA directors in each of the counties in the area and outside of the area actually in some cases, can communicate with another regarding emergency responses. So I think there is a lot of work that still has to be done regarding this. There are some bumps in the road, if you will, that have to be overcome but I think we are working towards a successful communication set-up.

Mr. CUELLAR. How much do you know of the \$1 billion that Congress has set aside for this type of communications?

Mr. WERTS. None, but I will take as much as I can get.

Mr. CUELLAR. Charlie needs to do another check presentation it seems in the near future. All right. Ms. Marrocolo, could you tell us in your opinion what is the appropriate role of the Federal Government in encouraging or mandating the method by which State and local governments train and manage emergency response operations?

Ms. MARROCOLO. That is a very good question. I think that the Federal Government can provide guidance and provide, and assist in the development of consensus-based standards for things like developing plans, incident management and training, and those types of standards and guidance could then be applied to different jurisdictions based on the individual needs of that jurisdiction. I think a cookie-cutter approach to emergency planning or to emergency management or to training and exercises at the Federal level would probably produce an inefficient result, an ineffective result at the local level given the differences between just in the State of Pennsylvania, the resources I have available in the City of Philadelphia are far different than what you are going to see in some of the counties in the more rural parts of the State. And so to say that we should be held to the same standard or that the same standard should apply in the same way to every jurisdiction, I think, would be ineffective.

Mr. CUELLAR. Okay. All right. Last question and then I will pass it on to Mr. Dent. As you know, cooperation between the Department of Homeland Security and the private sector is necessary to maintain this healthy economy while enhancing our nation's home-



land security efforts. This is one reason why Congress created the Private Sector Office of the Department. Have private sector representatives in the northeastern Pennsylvania participated in the training and exercise plan by the State or in the Department of Homeland Security and in what way?

Mr. PAUL. That would be an area that is outside of my expertise, Mr. Chairman. We have met at Wall Street West with Deputy Secretary at Homeland Security specifically to discuss the application of this project. But because our focus is sort of laser-focused, if you will, on this particular project I am unaware of those meetings.

Mr. CUELLAR. Okay. Let me at this time pass on the line of questioning to Mr. Dent and again, as you know, everything is being recorded and we want to get all the information. It is not only the testimony that you provide orally but also the written testimony that we will take, of course. The questions and the answers are important to use as we gather this type of information so we can take it back. So at this time I will pass on the line of questioning to Mr. Dent.

Mr. DENT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thanks to all of you for providing this excellent testimony. I wanted for you to think about a few things. First, I was pleased to hear all the comments about evacuation planning that have been ongoing in the event that some kind of catastrophic event, man-made or natural disaster would occur in the New York metropolitan area. And the one thing that I wanted to follow-up on in that vein was this, in the event of a biological attack in the New York metropolitan area, how would that affect evacuation planning? Obviously, if there is some kind of a blast, if it were some kind of a horrible detonation, people would want to get out of the blast zone and leave. But in the event of a biological attack involving some type of highly contagious pathogen like smallpox when maybe human movement is not the ideal thing in many States—if it happened in New York, New Jersey, or Pennsylvania some areas wouldn't want to receive people obviously who may be infected. So if you could maybe, you know, Bob Werts or General French might want to just talk about that issue. How would a biological attack impact us in the event of evacuation planning? How would this be different from other types of attack?

Mr. WERTS. Well, you know, we have kicked around the idea of quarantine and exactly how far law enforcement can go to quarantine individuals or prevent them from moving from one point to another. And that is certainly a subject that is up for debate and will be for quite some time. You know, is lethal force going to be utilized to enforce a quarantine? And I don't have the answer to that, Charlie, I really don't. I know that in talking about some of the things that New York City would evacuate their people from, in other words, the city turning around and saying okay, we need to evacuate. There are very few things that it is my understanding that they would actually do that. A tidal surge they would have to evacuate the city. And the problem is that most people, and as you know, the Poconos now has become the second Manhattan, if you will.

Mr. DENT. You said a third of the, I guess, the commuters go—a third of the residents are working in New York City or is that the New York metropolitan area? I am just curious.

Mr. WERTS. The New York area.

Mr. DENT. New York area.

Mr. WERTS. New York area.

Mr. DENT. So they could be in New Jersey or Manhattan or—

Mr. WERTS. We have people who commute to like Newark and those areas also. But there is a huge influx of people that would be expected to come home, if you will. And, you know, if it gets to a situation where at least we have some type of notice that this is going to occur we can possibly deal with some of it, checking people at, you know, some of the, you know, one of the advantages we have is we have a river between New York or Pennsylvania and New Jersey. You could, in fact, set-up some sort of monitoring system at those cross points. This would be a tremendous task to try and achieve. I mean we would have traffic backed-up right into the city if we tried to do that because you would have people trying to leave the city, some coming home, some relatives who live in the city with their people that live here trying to get our area. It would be a huge task to try and perform.

Mr. DENT. Yeah, and as a follow-up to that question, too, I guess, I just want to think about something here in terms of traffic patterns. How would you, you know, have you—how much thought have you given to that? Obviously, you might have to shut down the flow toward that area and utilize those highways—the east-bound highways would become westbound highways and probably, of course, on the 78 and 80 corridors, and probably on 95, as well. How much thought and planning has gone into that in coordination with our friends in New Jersey and New York?

Mr. WERTS. One of the things that in the meetings that we have had regarding evacuation we have invited members of the New Jersey State Police and the New York State Police to attend and they, in fact, have attended. One of the things you run into in this sort of mass evacuation is the fact that, and I think it has been touched on here, recently we—our Task Forces have gotten together to discuss evacuation because those people are going someplace. And if they are going someplace that someplace better know they are coming. Otherwise you are going to just have the problem someplace else, if you will. And we have discussed the fact that, you know, should we, in fact, close ramps of the interstate and keep people moving west. And to a certain extent there are some of those ramps that, yes, can be closed. We now run into the additional problem, if you will, that I have somebody that is coming home who wants to get off at that ramp.

Mr. DENT. Right.

Mr. WERTS. I have people that, you know, are now running out of gas—

Mr. DENT. Correct.

Mr. WERTS. —for their vehicles.

Mr. DENT. Like Houston, you know.

Mr. WERTS. And that is—and these are the things that we have discussed. I want to make it very clear that we have discussed

these things. We realize these issues are out there. Do we have the answers at this point? No, we don't.

Mr. DENT. Okay. Well, thank you, I am just glad that you were all engaged in planning and preparing for this. And I know it is a massive undertaking, heaven forbid, we should ever have to actually effectuate such a plan, but it is just encouraging to see that so much attention has been given to it and that we will be as prepared as we possibly can be.

Mr. FRENCH. And, Congressman, if I might.

Mr. DENT. General French, I know I wanted your comment on that.

Mr. FRENCH. Just as an additional thought on that not in the New York City scenario that you just described but we also have the capitol region from D.C. that those similar ongoing plans are currently underway because we anticipate that flow of traffic as well to come into the Commonwealth and so the infrastructure that is available the highway network is a situation we are aware of and we are continuing to develop plans for the national capitol region, as well, so two major metropolitan areas obviously potential to affect Pennsylvania.

Mr. DENT. Thank you, I know that will put a lot of pressure on south central Pennsylvania sure.

Mr. FRENCH. Yes, sir.

Mr. WERTS. Charlie, if I could just add one other thing. You know, this concept of these Task Forces I think is very important in this because, I think, with the breakdown of the regional application to these scenarios, if you will, is a lot easier to handle. In other words if we in the northeast get together with the southeast we can come up with some sort of planning. Rather than trying and look at this thing so broadly that you really can't get a hold on it, if you will. I mean I think obviously the State has got to be involved in this but I think the regional concept and the regional way we are handling a lot of this speaks well to making these things, getting them accomplished, if you will.

Mr. DENT. I also would like to follow-up to—on the issue of biological attack and, Bob, you mentioned in your testimony too that the vaccine plant is obviously located within your jurisdiction up there—

Mr. WERTS. Yes.

Mr. DENT. —the Sanofi Pasteur, and how much interaction have you had with them? Has their proximity to us helped us in our planning in terms of having the various countermeasures, whether it is smallpox or other things in terms of that?

Mr. WERTS. Well, I think one of the things that the fact that they are there I don't think it makes it any easier, if you will. We have the added responsibility, as I mentioned, of doing a buffer protection zone and dealing with the law enforcement agencies, et cetera, in protecting that. And it is not only that installation it is a number of other installations that are in the area that we won't talk about.

Mr. DENT. Sure. Right.

Mr. WERTS. They have been very receptive to our suggestions in implementing some security procedures and we have tried to work

them. We have had meetings almost on a weekly basis with the folks at Sanofi and that is ongoing.

Mr. DENT. Encouraged to hear that. I just wanted to kind of shift over to the issue of interoperability and perhaps, General French, you might be able to just give us some insights as to how you feel Pennsylvania has done in terms of interoperable communications. I have been working with some of our local police who are here today and other first responders in terms of trying to, you know, secure funding for various programs here to help facilitate interoperable communications among law enforcement, as well as other first responders. And as you know, the Commonwealth is in the process of deploying the 800 MHz interoperable system throughout the Commonwealth, and simultaneously State officials are working with Sprint Nextel to re-band commercial networks operating on these same frequencies. Would you be able to provide us with a status update regarding these efforts and how the re-banding effort with Sprint Nextel is affecting the rollout of the Statewide system?

Mr. FRENCH. Yes, sir. The 800 MHz system is continuing to evolve and in particular our void right now is mostly in the northern corridor in the center part of the State, the most rural region. But the 800 MHz system is continuing with additional cell towers, additional resources to be implemented throughout the Commonwealth. I know when we had the snow emergency back in February that one of the only means we had for us all to communicate across the Commonwealth was the 800 MHz system. And I know personally from being up on I-80 that it was very successful and the means to communicate with. One of the other things we have done is try to ensure that the various kinds of communications equipment that exist today and the various organizations one are identified, and two utilized. And for example, I will take one that I am probably most familiar with and that is the Guard I-6 Kits. What happened in that particular case was, and we actually deployed one of our teams to Texas as well as to Mississippi, but what that suite of equipment allows you to do is merge into one system a common communicator so that if a local law enforcement official has a certain type of communication equipment and a county official has a different piece of equipment, this allows you to put them together and both can communicate then through that kind of a communication suite. So those are a couple of examples of the direction that we have been able to employ here in the State in times of emergency.

Mr. DENT. I attended a briefing some time ago down in Montgomery County and this question should probably be directed more to Ms. Marrocolo, it seemed that in the southeast quadrant of the State, the five counties have been doing pretty well with respect to interoperability and at the time, I wish I could recall the exact statement, but it seemed that most municipalities have become interoperable within that five county area. There might be more challenges up in the northeast, given the number of counties and municipalities, and we have also mountainous issues here too, that I am sure affect the communications systems but I guess, that is what I am trying to understand. How interoperable are we in the southeast, maybe compared to our area up here in the northeast? Ms. Marrocolo, could you just talk about that a little bit?

Ms. MARROCOLO. Sure, I know that the Regional Counter Terrorism Task Force has invested an enormous amount of money in promoting interoperability in the five-county region, in fact, beyond the five-county region to an 11-county, three-state area. Our most recent project is the installation of microwave communication towers that will connect the 11-county Greater Delaware Valley region, which is the five counties in southeastern Pennsylvania, the five counties in New Jersey and then New Castle County, Delaware, so that all of the public safety answering points in that five-county area will be able to communicate with each other through this microwave communications project that we are installing through Homeland Security grant funding. So I think that is one kind of macro-level project on a more micro-level we work very closely to integrate our 800 MHz radio systems through the purchase of, I would like to, I guess the best way to be to put it is kind of band-aid solutions to a very complicated infrastructural problem. On scene tactical communications can be achieved across multiple radio systems or even phone systems by purchasing certain technology that you can then bring to a scene and integrate at the response. That is, you know, that is not ideal. That is a good stop-gap until you can solve these bigger, more complicated infrastructural problems which are extremely expensive.

Mr. DENT. Bob or General French do, either of you want to add to that in terms of how we are doing in the rest of the State?

Mr. FRENCH. I would just mention that we not only used some of these systems during the emergency crisis but it was just, we were just talking about it here even at the Pocono Raceway. The I-6 get the 800 MHz radios can be used to help in terms of non-emergency situations but critical to the needs of the local community as well, so a lot of application there.

Mr. DENT. Okay. Now, finally I want to just turn to Chad Paul who is working on the Wall Street West initiative. And I would like to, I just want to ask you, how could this Wall Street West initiative serve as a model for preparedness for the private sector both in New York and the rest of the country? Could you envision some kind of a similar partnership like this, a public-private partnership, in industries other than financial services? And if so, could you think of any right now? I mean, I understand the financial services and why this all makes sense and we are outside the blast zone, beyond the watershed.

Mr. PAUL. Of course, our initial focus is the fact that America's financial industry was shut down for four-plus days.

Mr. DENT. Right.

Mr. PAUL. Because of this event and we are looking to make sure the people in their planning process are thinking about what is the real impact of the backup in disaster recovery facilities that they are installing? So, I guess, the first lesson I would say that needs to be applied to more than just financial services is rather than thinking that you have solved the problem because you have a backup and disaster recovery plan or a location understanding the survivability of that backup and disaster plan. Immediately after 9/11 the financial services industry embarked upon the creation and construction at the cost of hundreds of millions if not billions of dollars of backup facilities that are all within the New York met-

ropolitan area. They built them in Brooklyn, in the Bronx, on Long Island, in north Jersey, where they are served by the same watershed, the same power system, the same transportation system and all of them literally are within what the Federal Government euphemistically calls the blast zone——

Mr. DENT. Right.

Mr. PAUL. —which is about a 60-mile radius of the city. So I guess the number one lesson is not getting comfortable with the fact that you got a location and a plan but that you understand the survivability of that location.

Mr. DENT. Thank you. And I often think, too, that here we are seated at the—my father worked in this building for many years, actually with Bethlehem Steel, and there was a time when he always said in this country that the steel industry was critical to our nation's national defense. And today in this world, here we are in eastern Pennsylvania and we still have a very important industry sector that is critical to our nation's homeland defense. I would argue that, perhaps, the pharmaceutical industry is as critical to our homeland defense as any. And given our proximity to central New Jersey and to the Philadelphia region and all that goes on there and, of course, up in the Sanofi plant that we all know so well, the only vaccine manufacturer in the United States, you know, that industry is one that could be critical to us in terms of survivability in the event of something catastrophic. I don't have an answer today but I have been thinking about that in terms of a similar initiative to Wall Street West. For instance, what if, you know, that sector is impacted and, of course, in New Jersey and Pennsylvania it has a very significant presence. So with that I thought at this time that I would go back to the Chairman on the second round of questioning if he has additional questions.

Mr. CUELLAR. Yes, and I think one of the things as you know the standard format is there are a couple of Congressman here, we ask questions, that is usually the way Congress works. But I am going to ask you to just bear with me on this little exercise because I think it is important that you also have an opportunity to ask me some questions. We might not answer them but we will get you to ask some questions but I do see, you know, that we do have some first responders in the audience so what I am going to do is I am going to ask starting off with, you know, I will go one-by-one and ask you what do you think Congress should be doing? And I am just going to, you know, get you off the script and just give you an opportunity to give you that opportunity to go ahead and start off that way. So, Mr. Sarubbi, I know you are with FEMA so we will make it an official request to ask that question.

Mr. SARUBBI. Do I have to go first?

Mr. CUELLAR. Give Mr. Werts here probably would be the first person to do that. He got the quickest response and I like that so Mr. Werts why don't you go first.

Mr. DENT. He wasn't shy when he was either.

Mr. WERTS. Well certainly the fact that, you know, money is always the root of everything. And first of all I think the concept of the Task Forces should be maintained. I think that is certainly something that should be ongoing. It is not something that I think should just fall by the wayside because as I said before there I

think there are a lot of things that we can do regionally and we do very well. We tend to relate to one another a little bit more easily and more readily when we are dealing in this type of an environment. I think the other thing that, and I know this isn't just in Pennsylvania but in many areas of the nation, our volunteers, you know, our EMS people, our fire people, I don't think we can lose site of the fact that they are volunteers, you know. And most of these companies, these fire companies go out and they survive on, you know, bingo and selling items, you know, to buy a new truck. They need direct help from, you know, from Congress from the United States. And I think that is extremely important. The fact that we have as many law enforcement agencies in the Commonwealth as we do certainly attests to the fact that there is a need for law enforcement. And don't forget the fact that these agencies require ongoing support from you folks to make sure that they can do the job that they have to do. And that is the everyday job. Today we are sitting here talking about some worse case scenarios where these folks are going to be pushed to the very limit, you know, without snapping, if you will. I mentioned in here about evacuations where law enforcement agencies are going to deal with two or three times the population that they may deal with on a daily basis. There is a lot of planning that has to be done by the agencies to make sure that they have a plan in place so that they can deal with this effectively. That takes time and it takes money for them to be able to do that and I hate to bring everything down to the dollar but unfortunately that is the life we live in today.

Mr. CUELLAR. Okay. Thank you. Anybody else, any of the four? I won't pick on anybody but if you want to add anything an opportunity to turn around and ask us questions, sure. Notice we haven't responded we are just on the listening mode today. Yes, sir.

Mr. PAUL. Congressman, the House Financial Services Committee has been reticent to make these guidelines or recommendations requirements on the part of the financial services industry even though they are well aware that the existing backup in disaster recovery facilities don't meet these guidelines, and in the event of an explosion of a small tactical nuclear weapon or a biological agent being spread in New York or any number of those kinds of serious disaster scenarios the backup facilities that exist today would not function or would not function well. What will it take to get Congress to require the securities and financial industry to, in fact, embrace these guidelines and recommendations as if they are, in fact, requirements?

Mr. CUELLAR. And that is a good point which leads to one thing that we see in Congress and is the fact that we have different committees with different jurisdictions. We are talking about homeland committee here but then if it touches another area then you have another chairman that comes in and says, whoa, that is our jurisdiction so the, you know, I think our Chairman Bennie Thompson has done a good job in working with other chairmen on other issues. I know that the, what is it, the infrastructure committee, transportation is one that, you know, we have gotten together and worked out some, you know, some of those issues on that so this is a good point that we are going to be conversing on then.

Mr. PAUL. Thank you. And one other item if I may is what will it take to get the Department of Homeland Security to commit some funding to this project so that, in fact, we can do it faster?

Mr. CUELLAR. Well, it really is not Homeland Security it is up to the Congress, no just kidding, no, no. Yeah, no, well, I will have Charlie answer that one. Just kidding. It is a good point.

Mr. DENT. Just a follow-up, I guess, and just on what you said Mr. Chairman about the jurisdictional issues—one of the key recommendations of the 9/11 Commission was to consolidate many of the these jurisdictional disputes and, you know, the Department of Homeland Security will often complain to us about the number of hearings they must attend in Congress, the multiple committees. The issue of terrorism risk insurance is under the Financial Services Committee as are many of the issues dealing with Wall Street West. All Homeland Security issues—I serve on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and the Homeland Security Committee—we both have jurisdiction over FEMA, for example, and different aspects of that agency, but these are continuing challenges. And the one issue that I wanted to raise with, I guess perhaps, the three in the center here, General French, Mr. Werts and Ms. Marrocolo, deals with the issue of post-Hurricane Katrina. There was a lot of analysis and assessment at the time about, you know, what should the Federal role be in the event of a major incident like we saw there? In that case it was a naturally occurring incident, a hurricane. And, you know, what should the role of the Federal Government be versus that of the State and local governments? I mean it was pointed out, General French, in your testimony that you have 150 people at the PEMA. FEMA has a few thousand, about 2,500 employees—

Mr. SARUBBI. Yes, about 2,600 employees.

Mr. DENT. —2,600 employees. Obviously, the State and Federal Governments have many other assets that they deploy to the scene but there were a lot of questions and comments at the time about this layered system of response—local, State, and Federal. Was that the best model? Should we be federalizing many of these types of responses? I heard from many governors not long after 9/11, after Katrina, that that would be a mistake. I was just curious what your thoughts were. Should we maintain this layered system of response? You know, obviously, at the local levels where you have so many of the assets in terms of first responders, FEMA doesn't have a police department or a fire department but our local communities do. And so I would just like to get your thoughts and maybe, General French, you would like to start us off on that.

Mr. FRENCH. Yes, sir, I will be glad to. Thank you. I use an example that while it is not a catastrophic one as Katrina or others that you might have mentioned but I will use a local example that just happened here in the last month in which we had an emergency here in the Lehigh Valley that had the potential of being a very catastrophic element of NBC warfare that we talked about potential there for a radiological weapon when first identified. When the report first came in the local agencies began to work that obviously immediately. They have the best feel for what is happening on the ground because they are right there.

Mr. DENT. Which incident are you referring to?



Mr. FRENCH. When we had the FedEx situation that arose and handled very well by the local incident commander, Chief Stevenson, I believe was his name, who initially working with the on-site here at the hospital, Lehigh Valley.

Mr. DENT. St. Luke's, I think, St. Luke's Hospital.

Mr. FRENCH. St. Luke's, yes, sir. While that was taking place and was the local responders were using their available resources, there was a chance for the communication element to take place where the situational awareness was known all the way up through to the State level as far as what was happening at the local level. Our county level emergency managers were tuned into that, in fact, on-site as it progressed but we continued with the local incident manager being in charge. That in itself as the day went on and as we went through the entire protocols turned out to be, I think, the best way to deal with that because you have situational awareness at various levels. It is not you are totally in the dark at the county or at the State or at the Federal level. But speaking in that regard when it came time to bring the additional resources to bear there wasn't a delay in when that, those additional resources could actually be engaged but rather because of the situation awareness we were able to respond at, I think, an appropriate time. Because as it turned out it was expeditiously identified through some sophisticated testing that was done at a higher level than what the incident commander had. So I think Rob French's opinion is that when you have an emergency if you can treat that at the most local level that is probably going to end up getting you the best result.

Mr. DENT. Thank you. Bob or Ms. Marrocolo, do either of you have a comment on that?

Mr. WERTS. I have known.

Ms. MARROCOLO. I mean I think where you have seen large breakdowns in the response is where organizations that typically don't provide direct services or have a direct role like in incident mitigation, when they try to step-in and take control of the incident and I think, you know, I think you said it best. All disasters are local. Locals are the first to respond and the last to leave in any emergency and they have the most direct experience dealing with the issues in that community. And I think I agree with General French that to the extent that you can you want to keep control of an incident at the local level and that is, you know, management of the resource requests, control of how information flows up and down the chain, I think that that is essential. When that leaves the local level it becomes very difficult for people that are not a part of that response structure to integrate. A lot of what we do is not just writing plans on paper. It is building the relationships so that at three o'clock in the morning when you are standing behind a big cloud of smoke, you know the person across from you and you can work together. And to bring in outsiders in the middle of a mess like that can become very difficult for them to succeed. And, in fact, in many ways it sets-up organizations to fail. And so I think one of the things that Congress should be doing is strengthening that local response structure by doing things like by promoting guidance and standards. And I think through the development of guidance and standards, you know, consensus-based standards not just something that comes down from the top. You know, there can go

a long way to helping local governments develop the plans and the processes that they need to be prepared.

Mr. DENT. Bob, do you have any final comments?

Mr. WERTS. Charlie, I have to agree with both of my counterparts here at the table. These things have got to be started and maintained at a local level. For something, you know, such as the FedEx thing for all of a sudden that we know that the Feds aren't going to jump into this. It is just not going to happen. And I see no reason to try and reinvent the wheel here. We have a system in place. There is some—are there some difficulties? Yes, but I think that there are things that can be easily overcome. Communication is paramount in these things. It is important that, you know, the local incident commander makes sure that the county is aware of it. The county has to make sure that PEMA is aware of it so that when it is necessary for those other assets to be brought in they can be brought in as quickly as possible. I don't think you really have to change it. I have to agree that maybe there is some.

Mr. DENT. I am glad to hear you feel that way because I think there was sort of a knee-jerk reaction right after Katrina that there seemed to be a feeling that the Federal—that the Federal level needed to be more engaged directly. And, I think, one of the governors who came in to see us shortly after that said the only disaster greater than Katrina would be to federalize emergency response. One of the governors did make that comment very clearly in citing the fact that he said, you know, in which hurricanes will you choose to respond and in which ones should I be? Basically, it would take him off the hook. He and the locals, in other words, in terms of preparedness, and it would be a Federal responsibility. And I was just pleased that that is your sense that we ought to maintain that system and even strengthen it. So, I guess, the other final comment would be, what is the lesson that I think you all learned from Katrina about this layered system of response? What worked and what didn't? What did we do right? What didn't we do right? What do you think we can do to strengthen that State and local system? I mean we obviously realize FEMA had many challenges and difficulties during Katrina, but we also saw some of the challenges at the State and local level, and if there are any lessons you learned out of that, what were they as professionals in the field?

Mr. SARUBBI. I am sorry. Could I just make a couple comments on the Federal response? Under the old paradigm and as previous speakers have pointed out all responses are local.

Mr. DENT. Right.

Mr. SARUBBI. And what would happen is, of course, the first responders would respond. When they get overwhelmed the State would come in. When they get overwhelmed then the Federal Government would come in. And usually by that time the Federal Government got involved it was really too late. With our new posture in leaning forward we are trying to be in a position where we can provide assistance to the State and local folks in a more timely fashion. And we have done that through a number of avenues in terms of increasing our ability to gain situational awareness. For example, the General spoke about this FedEx incident. We were monitoring that very closely. Should the Federal Government need

to step-in we were prepared to do that. We have also implemented new procedures that will allow Federal assistance to come more quickly in terms of being able to expedite the declaration process. And even, also.

Mr. DENT. You mean in terms of amendments to the Stafford Act, is that what?

Mr. SARUBBI. Yes, sir, I am sorry, yes, sir. The Stafford Act Declaration process, for example, for both man-made and natural disasters. And we are also able to, new procedures in place to provide Federal support even if there isn't a declaration. Now if there isn't a declaration and we do provide Federal support the State would have to reimburse FEMA for that but it does give them the opportunity to access those Federal assets and dollars.

Mr. DENT. Are there any, and maybe that is probably a better question and you started to address it. Is there anything that we ought to be doing to address the Stafford Act to help make this system better? Any changes beyond those that have already been made in terms of bringing the preparedness function back into FEMA and other changes we made last year?

Mr. SARUBBI. I don't know if there is anything that needs to be done to amend the Stafford Act. I think I just want to thank you for your support that you have given FEMA in its efforts to rebuild itself. Under Chief Paulson's vision of new FEMA we are becoming more forward leaning and becoming a more nimble organization. And I think we are well on our way to do that and now that we have had preparedness back into FEMA we are able to better prepare ourselves and our State and local partners through being able to have greater oversight over grants and the training and exercises and planning. All those things have helped build solid relationships and helped provide the right resources to the folks that need them the most. But as I said I think the procedures that we are putting in place in terms of enhancing our situational awareness capabilities and our ability to be there to support our State and local partners much more quickly than we ever have before are working. And we just need more time to do that and funding and so, continued funding and so forth.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, I don't want to belabor this. I just am very appreciative of all the folks who provided testimony today, and as the Chairman mentioned, he and I are going to be heading from here right down to Washington. General Petraeus has a little hearing today too, beginning at 12:30 for six hours and, of course, we scheduled our hearing before he was scheduled. But so we are going to make sure that we catch part of that at some point today. He and Ambassador Crocker are coming, in but thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back to you at this time.

Mr. CUELLAR. Thank you, and first of all I certainly want to thank Congressman Dent. As I mentioned he is an outstanding member and I look forward to working with him for a long time. I want to thank all of the witnesses, also, that we have here. Your testimony was right on line and I think what we need to do is learn from each other and make the process better, and make it work better. And I think everybody is in agreement that the local part of it is so important and I think the relationships that you all establish working with each other is so important because I don't

think we want to be exchanging business card in the middle of a disaster like has happened in the past. And I think that was a mistake but we are learning and it is a process and this hearing is going to go a long way because you know everything has been taken down and we will be reviewing this. Finally, to the people out there in the audience let me just say this. I think Homeland Security is everybody's responsibility. We all have a responsibility to all work with our local and State and Federal officials and I think as long as we do this as a team this will be in the best interest of our country. So at this time I want to thank all of the witnesses again for their valuable testimony and, of course, our members we might have some additional questions and if we do send you something in writing we will ask you to submit that to us as soon as possible. Hearing no further business the hearing is adjourned. Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 11:50 a.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

